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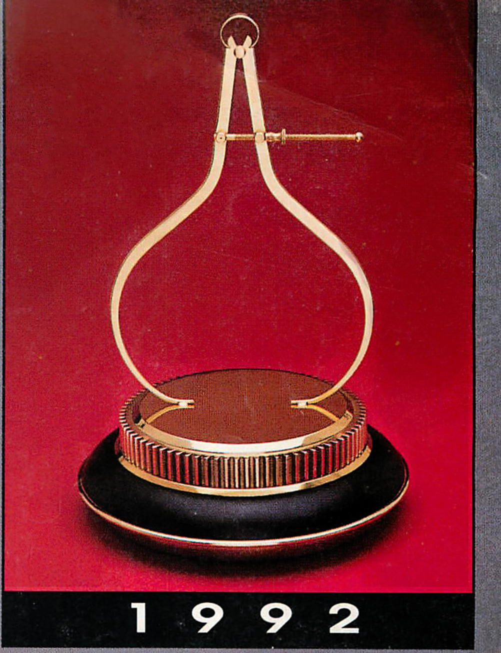

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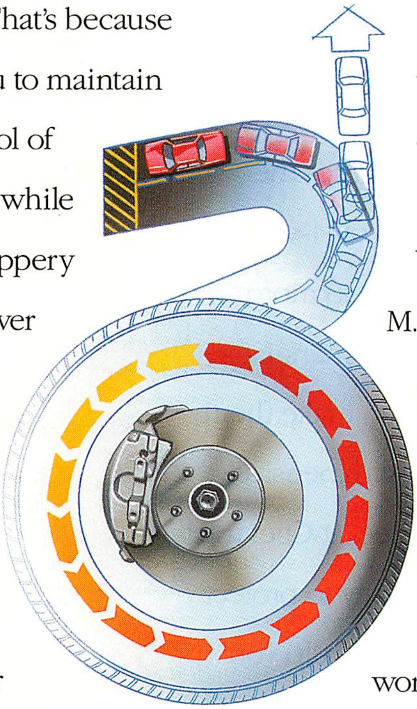

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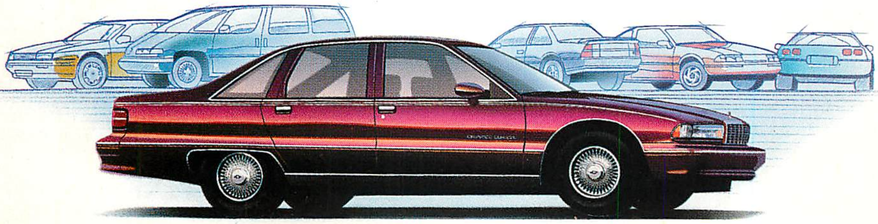

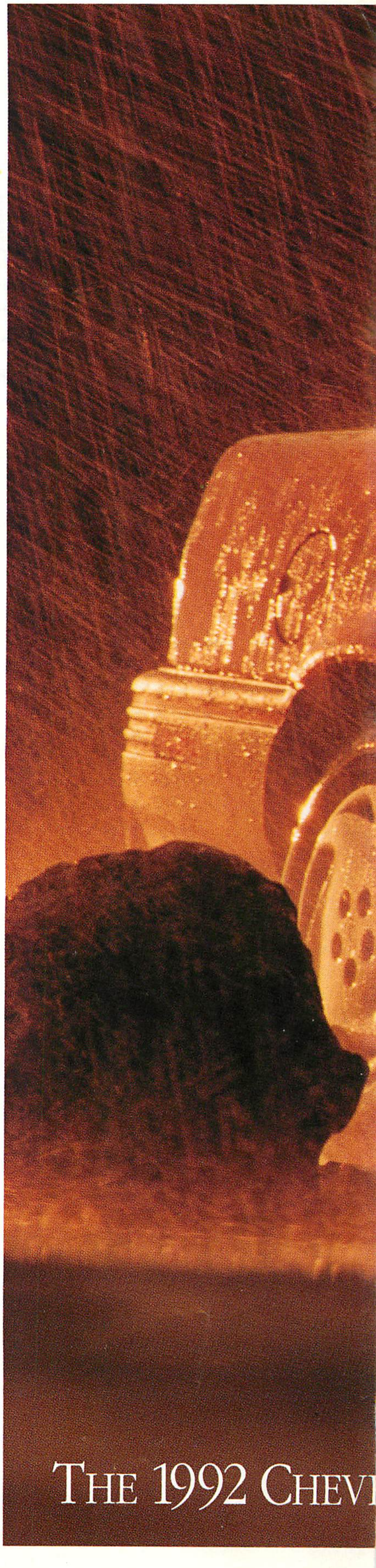

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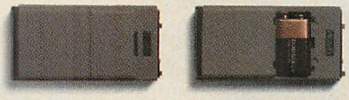

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MT's '92 Car of the Year • 48

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LETTERS

Hand Signals

Concerning Jeff Karr's "Right of Way": It's about time someone put in print what all us "conscious humans" have said for years with a simple hand gesture.

Ronald Roop
Blacksburg, Va.

One Man's Meat...

When I saw my December issue in the mailbox, I couldn't wait to see the cover and read the story (which I usually find excellent). NSX killer? How could you disillusion all those poor readers of yours? You know better than to call a—at best—3000 GT VR-4 wannabe better than a world-class ultimate grand tourer. The RX-7 looks like a bulimic Miata, and that's being generous. The only reason the RX-7 is quicker is because of those cheeky twin turbos. Mazda's got to be kidding. The Miata's a good little car, but it's trying to cross-breed it to its Formula One racer.

In addition, the NSX is way more exclusive. The RX-7 will go the way of Nissan's poor 300ZX: a good concept taken to the extreme. Overproduction. The NSX turns heads, but with thousands of RX-7s on the road, nobody will give it a second thought. The only good thing about the RX-7 is that it has an airbag.

Acura's NSX is the best-handling car in the world. Remember?

Mark Towns
Corpus Christi, Tex.

Hey, that Mazda RX-7 is a sharp-looking car! But wait a minute. Something about it looks strangely familiar. Hmmm. Add sidepipes, take off the hatch cover, roll down the windows. A miniature Viper? I thought the Japanese were *good* at copying and improving! Once you compare the sleek, new RX-7 to its stylist's inspiration, it loses its charm. I'll take the V-10 Viper—the original.

Terry Yarish
Wausau, Wis.

The Whole Team

Mr. Ross was gracious to associate my name with the Chrysler Integrated Child Seat in the December Detroit Report. However, in fairness and in reality, the seat only exists due to a team of dedicated and talented engineers who devoted themselves above and beyond the call to accomplish this project. Our core team includes engineers Matthew Dukatz, Fred Kresky, Jeffrey Lambert, James Lezotte, Robert Murphy, and George Popa, who have earned high honors and awards from NHTSA, *Popular Science*, and the Society of Plastic Engineers.

Ronald S. Zarowitz, Manager,
Car and Truck Safety,
Chrysler Corporation
Highland Park, Mich.

Buy This Bridge

After reading C. Van Tune's article on the HKS Mitsubishi Eclipse, I think he should change his name to C. Car Toon. What a bargain! For

Stand Up,
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LA
1073

LETTERS

about $7000, you can tweak an Eclipse to outrun a Z28. I'd like to sell you some oceanfront property here in West Virginia. You suggest to "...just look around for some V-8s to embarrass." I hope you unsuspectingly pick on an Z28 that some guy has done a $7000 tweak job on.

Rick Niland
Keyser, W. Va.

Remarking on your HKS Mitsubishi Eclipse GSX story in the December issue, seeing how much you spent on aftermarket parts, I think you should look at your March '90 issue in the story on page 74 when you tested a '90 Chevrolet Camaro IROC-Z. The 0-60 time of the Eclipse was only two tenths of a second faster, and the IROC was stock! Figuring a '91 Z28 comparably equipped could probably duplicate the '90 IROC's 0-60 time, and with almost $7000 to spend on aftermarket performance upgrades, I'm sure I could come up with better 0-60 and quarter-mile times, as well as better skidpad numbers.

Lou Vena
Las Vegas, Nev.

To spend an additional $6899.55 on a car that already costs $18,000 is absolutely absurd. Why not go out and buy a Ford Mustang GT, throw a nitrous kit on it, go 0-60 mph in 4.7 seconds, run the quarter mile in 12.0 seconds, and still have $6000 change? It just doesn't figure, Sorry. I've had the opportunity to run into a few modified HKS cars, and they all just can't seem to catch my Pony.

Craig Berman
Irvine,Calif.

You've overlooked the fact that there's more to life than quarter-mile times. (Nitrous is fun, but what do you do when the bottle's empty and a challenger has just pulled alongside?) This Eclipse's 0.97g skidpad talents put it far ahead of almost every exoticar we can name, and its all-wheel drive gives it all-weather performance capabilities the Camaro or Mustang will never have—even with $7000 in modifications.—CVT

The 'Fox and the 'Hawk

I really enjoyed the "Firebird Firepower" article in your December issue. The Firehawk and the Firefox are two awesome pieces of machinery. Too bad the Firefox isn't for sale. (It probably would cost a fortune, anway.)

I can't wait until you test the upcoming '93 model Firebird and Camaros, and I'm sure you can't wait, either. I hope GM puts the new LT-1 engine or the Northstar V-8 in the new models.

Thomas Laster
Hopkinsville, Ky.

To spend $50,000 for a Pontiac, any Pontiac, is asinine. Even $40,000 is ludicrous. Buy a ZR-1 or a supercharged Mustang (or two).

Todd Paulos
Seal Beach, Calif.

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POLICE SAY USE IT!

LETTERS

Sounds like the boys (and girls) at Pontiac are a tad premature with the Firehawk—a limited-production vehicle. They took time to place appropriate seating, passenger restraints, braking, and positively alluring—if not enchanting—engine and drivetrain components. They should have taken time to complete the package, and made sure the suspension would be able to accommodate the tires and torque output. Any rubber removed from the tires should be applied to asphalt, not fenders and wheelwells. Wake up, guys, you're going overboard about a $50,000 go-real-fast car that has tires that scrape the wheelwells.

Attention to little engineering details—like wheel clearance over the *entire* range of tire travel, especially with all factory-installed options—says a lot about what's important to the company and what the company thinks the buying public will put up with. Can you think of a comparable $50,000 German or Japanese product with a similar yet glaring oversight? American companies are capable of better!

Christopher Moheimani
Philadelphia, Pa.

That's Just Super

Bernard Cahier's sidebar on the EB110 Bugatti contains an error. The Type 55 Bugatti was supercharged not turbocharged.

Skip Marketti
Executive Director
Auburn Duesenberg Museum
Auburn, Ind.

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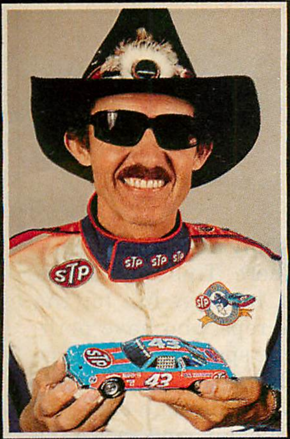

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—Richard Petty

Richard Petty 43

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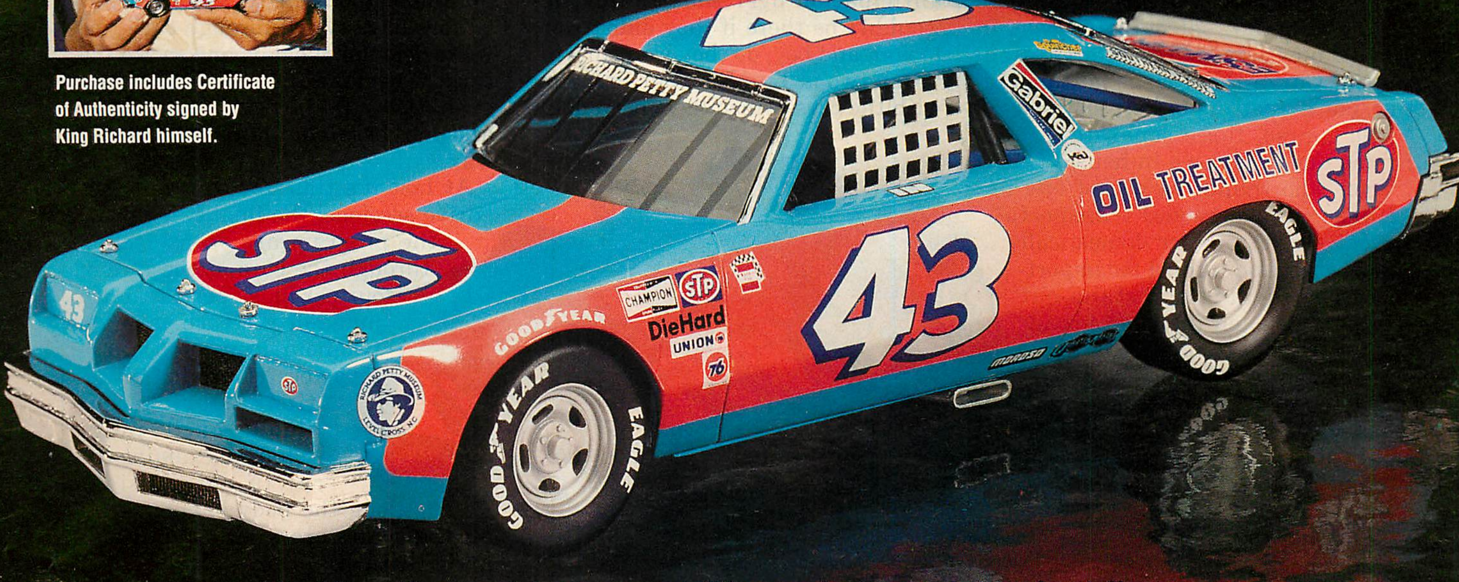
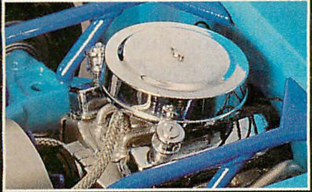
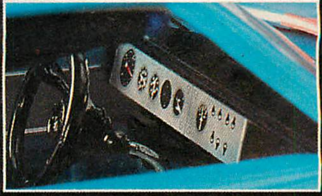


On his retirement from competitive racing, a spectacular tribute to the greatest stock car racer of all time, Richard Petty, winner of seven Daytona Races.





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RIGHT OF WAY

BY JEFF KARR

CAR OF THE YEAR– HOW IT'S DONE

Of all the odd and wonderful experiences of car-testing duty, the Car of the Year competition is probably the most unique. *Motor Trend's* familiar award has been with us since 1949, but the actual selection process in place now is a more recent refinement. Car of the Year is getting older, but it's getting better, too.

Of course, three separate awards come under our own in-house "Of the Year" shorthand; we've got one for trucks (in a personal transportation context), one for domestically built cars, and a third for imported cars. Picking one stand-out vehicle in each of these broad categories is tougher than it seems. Since vehicles are so widely varied in purpose and form, it's a challenge to compare them on an equal footing, and in a way that has some value for the reader. We do this by asking our editors to score the candidates in a bunch of narrow areas, using as a yardstick competitive vehicles in the same class. The point is to find the new vehicle that's the greatest step forward in class.

JOE GOEBEL

PICKING ONE STANDOUT VEHICLE IS TOUGHER THAN IT SEEMS

This year's Car of the Year program is a good model of how we go about doing this. Though the *total* event from conception to published article consumes about 25 man-weeks of staff time, the actual event fits neatly into one fall week in San Diego. The first day is taken up with manufacturer orientations, where our judges listen to half-hour presentations by the manufacturers about each candidate car. In the briefings, we hear of the wonders of each new vehicle; why it's just so darn good, it simply *has* to win. Generally there are slide shows, videos, speeches, disembodied car parts, and in one historic case, a live Mariachi band. Half an hour doesn't sound like a lot of time to tell the story of a brand-new car, but we've found it more than enough to get the significant and memorable points across. Among the manufacturer's reps, there's a palpable fog of anxiety and anticipation over the group. They wouldn't be there if they didn't want to win, and boy, do they want to win.

Day two is Test Day, our first time with the cars, which have been delivered to COY by the manufacturers. Here, we do our instrumented testing. The cars are required to be in stock form, with no hidden performance-enhancing surprises. We bring tire pressures to within proper spec (they're often mysteriously high), and check for shaved tread (not unheard of). We compare the test numbers we generate with figures we've recorded on other examples of the same model in the past as a check against cars that are suspiciously fast or that handle too well.

The following day, we descend on an autocross-type cone course, where we drive in a bold and irresponsible way to find out how the cars behave when pushed much too far; if a car has any antisocial habits, they'll surface here. This is great fun for our judges, but less fun for the manufacturer's reps who have nothing to do except spectate and gorge on snack foods. After eight of our editors have cycled through each car, we're done for the day, and so are the tires. The manufacturers pass the evening by laying on fresh rubber and maybe a couple extra coats of wax.

At last it's time for the ride-and-drive sessions; the final two days of the program are spent cycling through the cars at the rate of four per judge per day. Each judge drives each car on a two-hour loop composed of a variety of driving situations. During that loop, each judge stops to examine the car in detail, sight along the body panels, sit in all the seats, press all the buttons, and fill in his scores. It's during these loops that a car either wins or loses the title. Glowing happy-talk in the briefings can't help a car when it's alone with a highly critical driver; a coat of wax won't make it handle any better or stop any shorter. Ultimately, if the car doesn't deliver, the judges don't either.

At the end of the final day, when all the driving is done, we look over our numbers one last time, ink them in, and hand them over to the accountant. Then we drive home in suspense. Early the following week, the Ernst & Young people give us the results, and we have a winner. You can read about it in this issue.

And just for the record, we'd like to let the winning manufacturer know we never noticed (or appreciated) that its detailing crew was consistantly rotating the car's wheel covers so that the logos were right side up before every driving session. The car won because of its entire performance, not the vertical orientation of the hubcaps. Still, that was a nice touch; but if one of your competitors hadn't pointed it out to us, we never would've known. You might want to try something more obvious next time, like a Mariachi band. MT

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The hand-finished paint was hardly dry on our first Porsche 968s before we started hearing the stories. Stories about them going "under the knife."

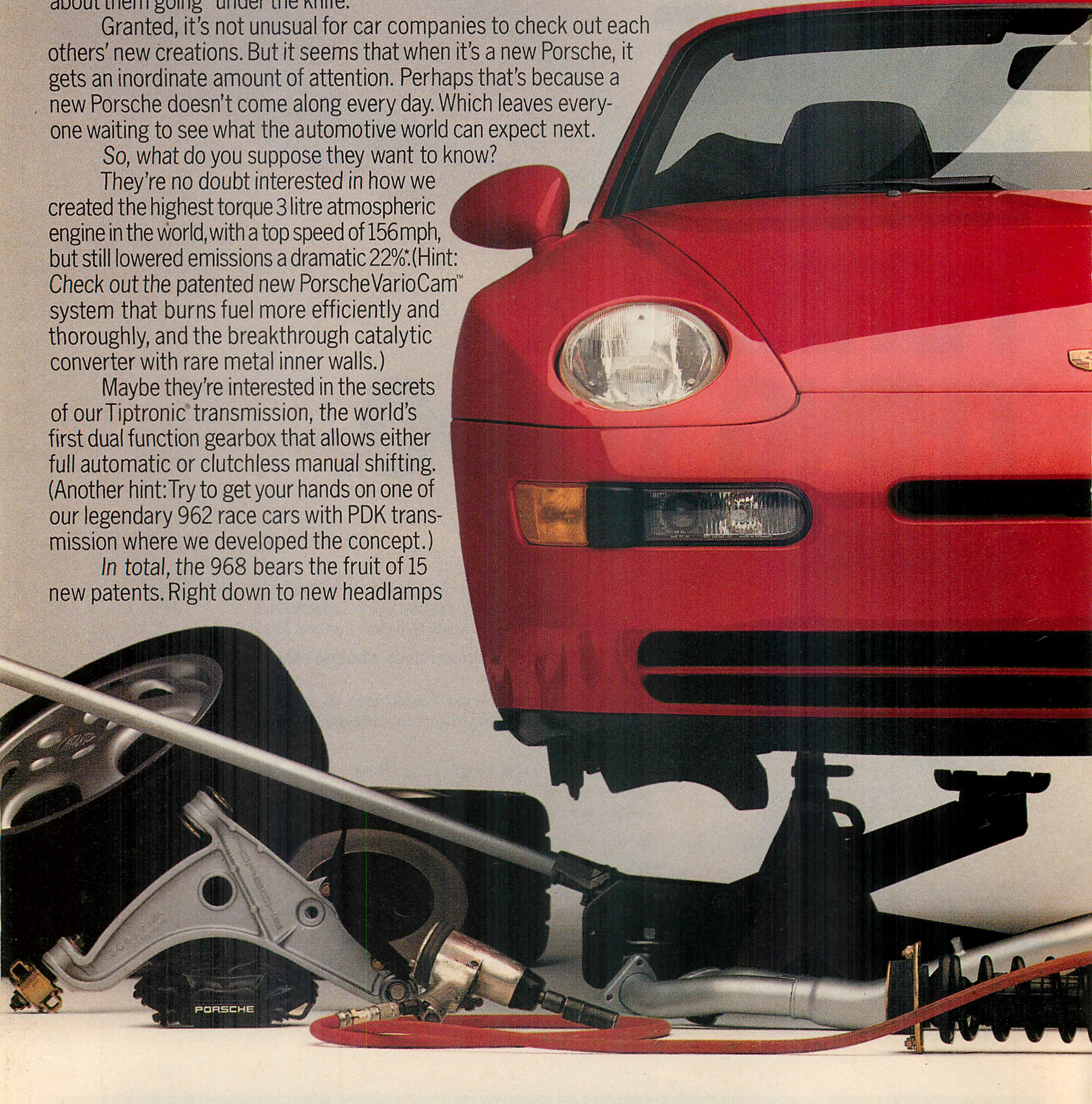
Granted, it's not unusual for car companies to check out each others' new creations. But it seems that when it's a new Porsche, it gets an inordinate amount of attention. Perhaps that's because a new Porsche doesn't come along every day. Which leaves everyone waiting to see what the automotive world can expect next.

So, what do you suppose they want to know?

They're no doubt interested in how we created the highest torque 3 litre atmospheric engine in the world, with a top speed of 156 mph, but still lowered emissions a dramatic 22%*. (Hint: *Check out the patented new Porsche VarioCam™* system that burns fuel more efficiently and thoroughly, and the breakthrough catalytic converter with rare metal inner walls.)

Maybe they're interested in the secrets of our Tiptronic® transmission, the world's first dual function gearbox that allows either full automatic or clutchless manual shifting. (Another hint: Try to get your hands on one of our legendary 962 race cars with PDK transmission where we developed the concept.)

In total, the 968 bears the fruit of 15 new patents. Right down to new headlamps



Porsche 968:

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*Comparison of EPA Federal Test Procedure results for 968 coupe and 944S2 coupe.

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have already bought one.
se they want them for?

that use the principle of a bee's eyes, as over 1,000 reflective facets provide variable point focus to cut reflected glare.

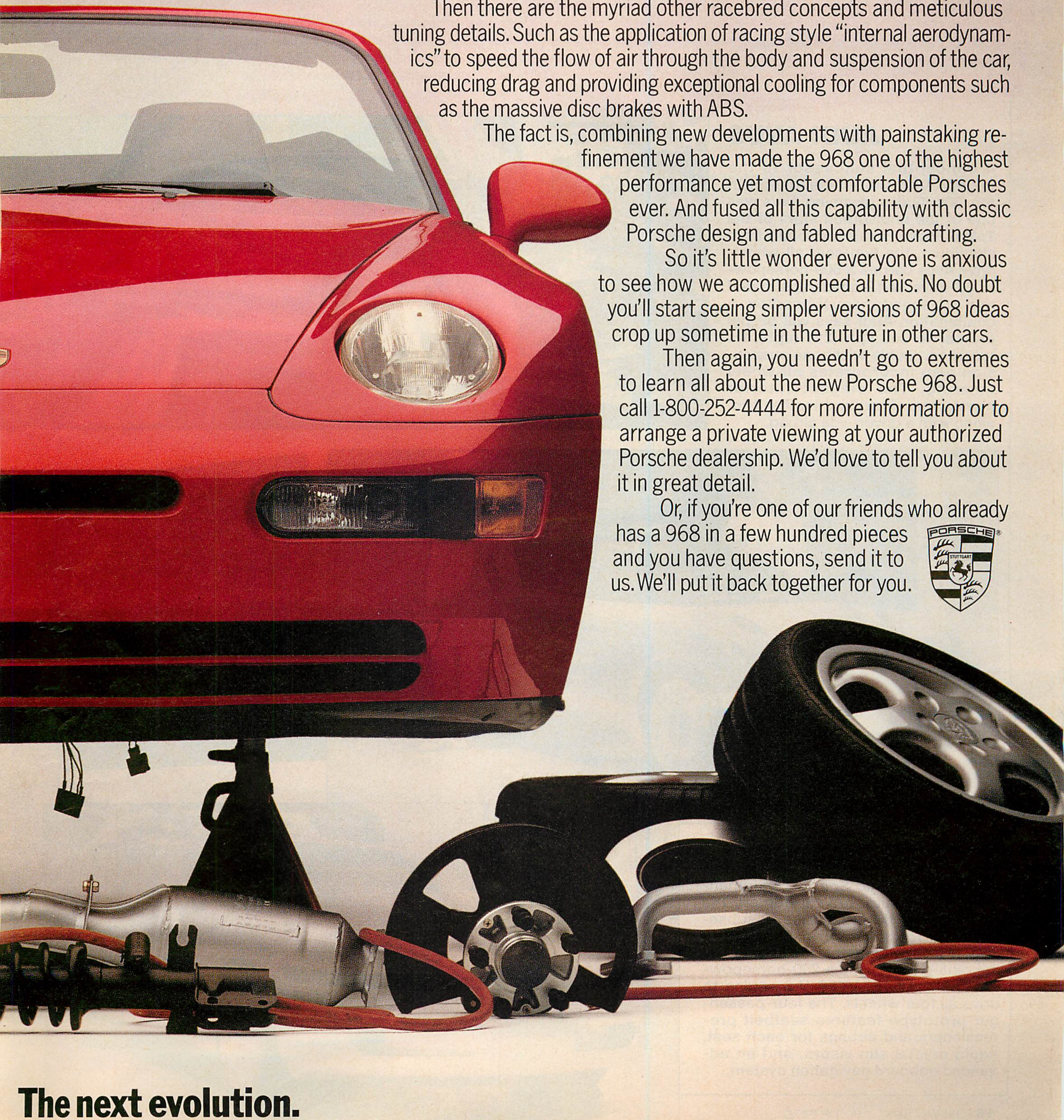
Then there are the myriad other racebred concepts and meticulous tuning details. Such as the application of racing style "internal aerodynamics" to speed the flow of air through the body and suspension of the car, reducing drag and providing exceptional cooling for components such as the massive disc brakes with ABS.

The fact is, combining new developments with painstaking refinement we have made the 968 one of the highest performance yet most comfortable Porsches ever. And fused all this capability with classic Porsche design and fabled handcrafting.

So it's little wonder everyone is anxious to see how we accomplished all this. No doubt you'll start seeing simpler versions of 968 ideas crop up sometime in the future in other cars.

Then again, you needn't go to extremes to learn all about the new Porsche 968. Just call 1-800-252-4444 for more information or to arrange a private viewing at your authorized Porsche dealership. We'd love to tell you about it in great detail.

Or, if you're one of our friends who already has a 968 in a few hundred pieces and you have questions, send it to us. We'll put it back together for you.



The next evolution.

TRENDS

EDITED BY BOB NAGY

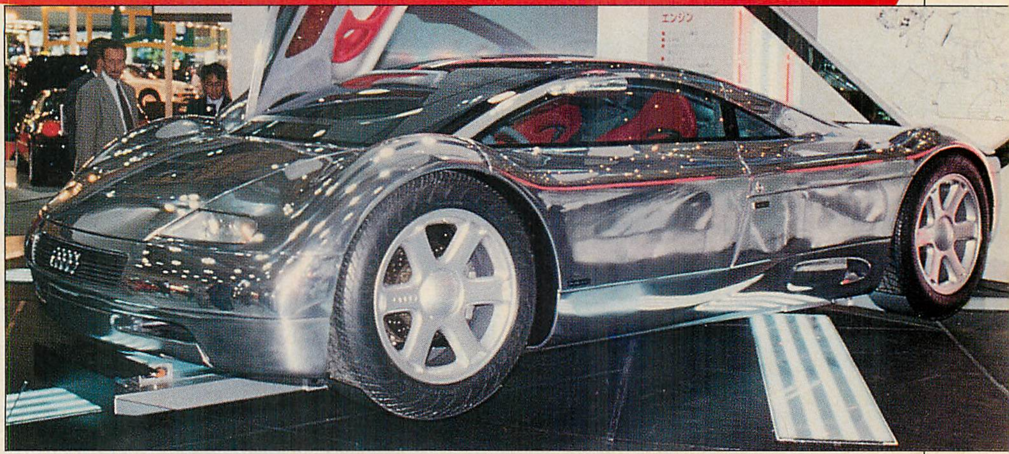
TOKYO MOTOR SHOW '91

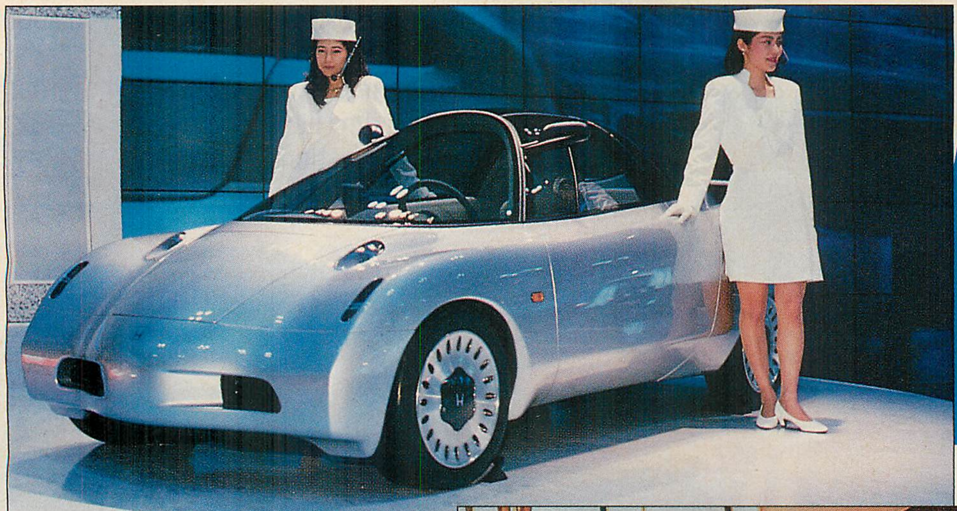
Although the theme of the 29th Tokyo Motor Show—"Discovering a New Relationship: Man, Car, and Earth as One"—led some to fear that environmental issues might overwhelm the basic wonderfulness of this always-exciting exposition, reality proved quite the contrary. There certainly was no shortage of "green" elements and plenty of attention lavished on alternative fuels, electric vehicles, recycling, and widescale use of lightweight materials. But despite a framework of environmental responsibility, Tokyo delivered an amazing array of memorable vehicles. Highlighted by several truly spectacular tour-de-force one-offs, it arguably could be viewed as the most impressive auto exhibition of 1991.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID A. GAUTREAU

AUDI AVUS

A conceptual successor to the mighty Auto Union speedsters of the '30s, Audi's gleaming Avus was one of the undisputed stars of the Tokyo Show. Fashioned totally from aluminum, the two-seat all-wheel-drive Avus carries a 509-horsepower 60-valve W-12 amidships mated to a six-speed manual gearbox, a combination Audi says will propel the car to 340 kph (211 mph). Its racebred double wishbone suspension also incorporates all-wheel steering. The elegant interior boasts real wood and leather trim along with a driver-side airbag.





HONDA EP-X

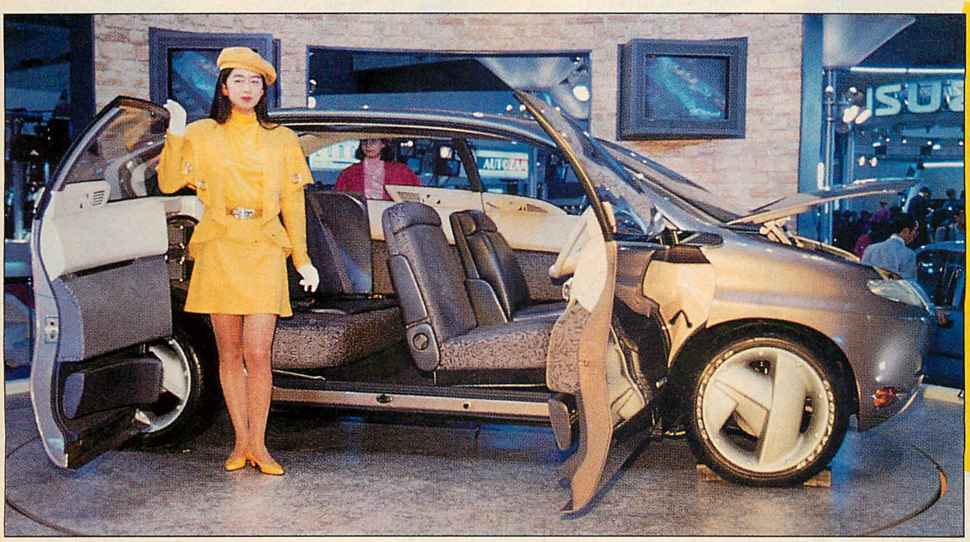
Shades of the old Messerschmidt bubble car! Honda's tiny EP-X (for Efficient Personal Experimental) offers tandem seating for two with an aircraft-style canopy. Its all-aluminum construction keeps curb weight below 1365 pounds. Powered by a 70-horsepower 1-liter VTEC engine, the EP-X is fitted with an airbag and multicontrol liquid crystal display panel.

HONDA FS-X

Honda's Futuristic Sports Experimental model is rumored to indicate the direction the firm may take in subsequent production cars. Fabricated largely from aluminum, the luxuriously appointed FS-X uses a 280-horsepower 3.5-liter DOHC VTEC V-6 engine to drive all four wheels. The four-passenger prototype features seatbelt pretensioners and airbags for each seat, liquid crystal sun visors, and an advanced onboard navigation system.

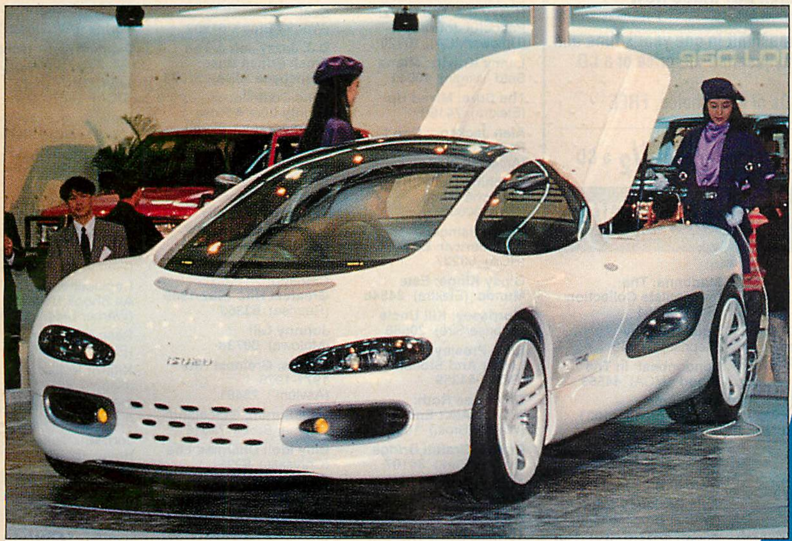
TRENDS

TOKYO SHOW



ISUZU TERRAZA

Conceived to provide the greatest amount of interior room in the most compact exterior package, the four-door Terraza prototype can comfortably accommodate five in a one-box design that's a mere 157 inches long. Power comes from an experimental turbocharged adiabatic ceramic engine that uses no liquid coolant. A swiveling fifth wheel drops from below the rear bumper to facilitate parallel parking.

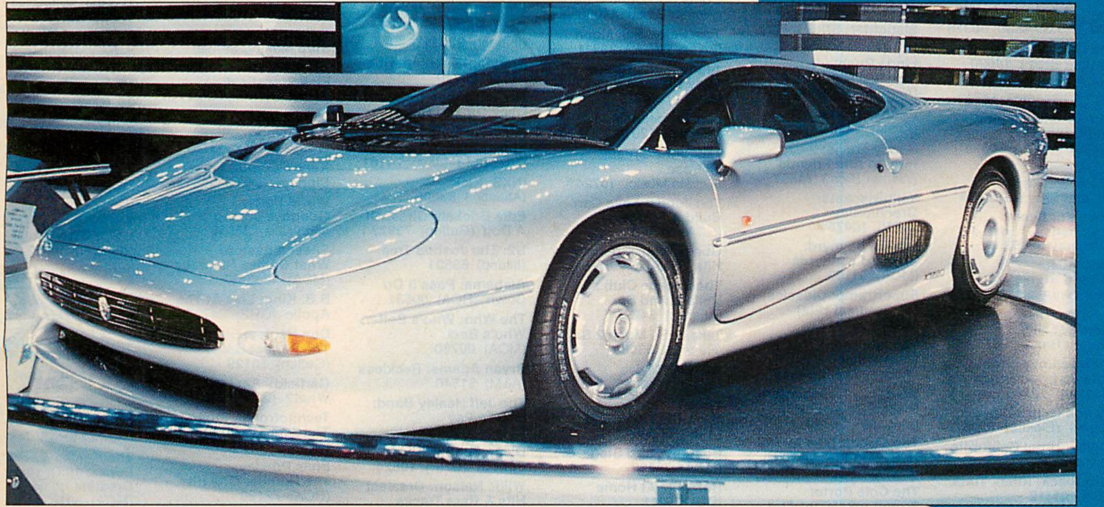


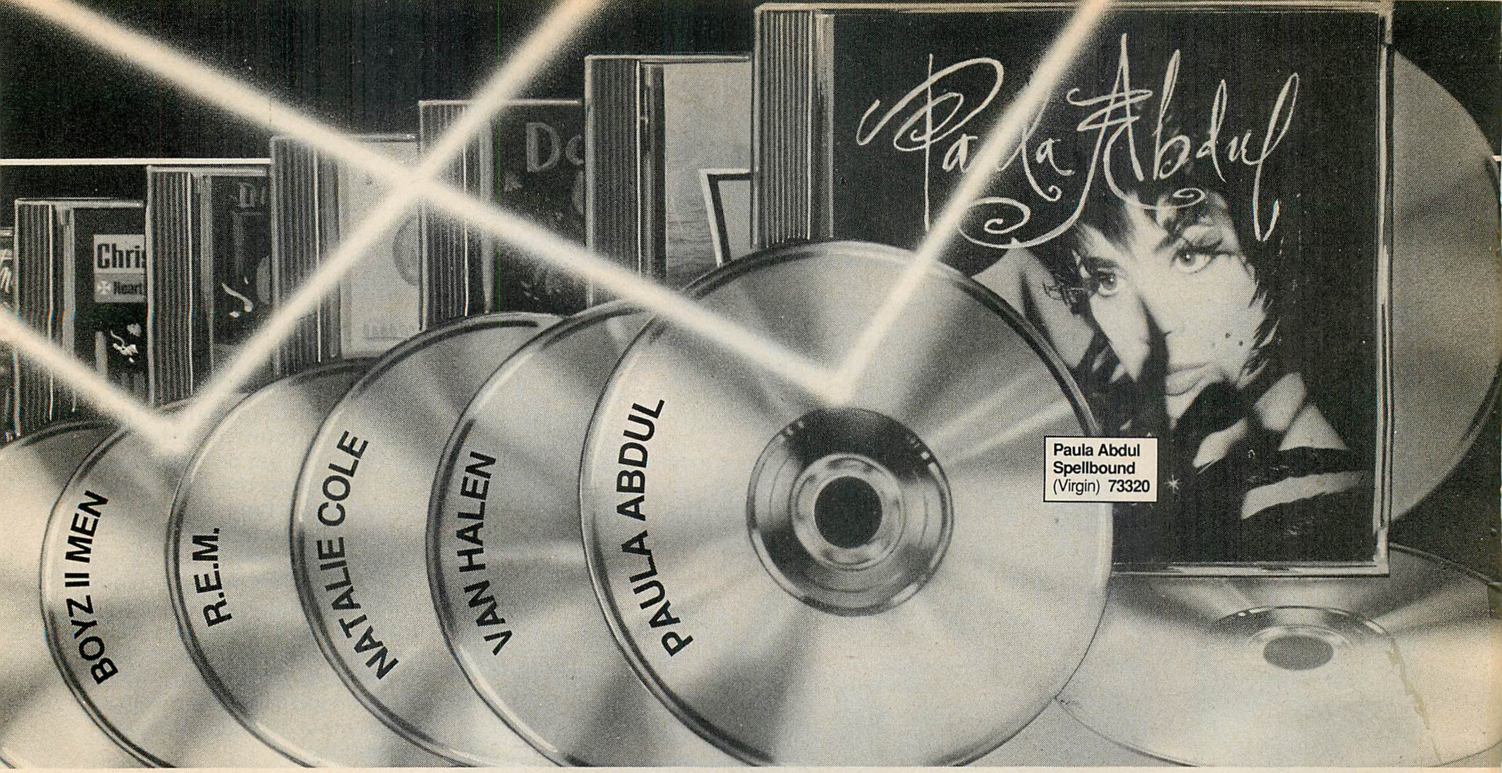
ISUZU COMO

Isuzu dubbed its sleek Como a "grand sport/utility vehicle," but whatever its formal classification, this stunning prototype drew lots of crowd interest. The curvaceous four-seater has plenty of room for cargo and is powered by a compact 3.5-liter V-12 midship-mounted engine that drives the rear wheels through a five-speed manual gearbox.

JAGUAR XJ220

Making its world debut, Jaguar's beautiful XJ220 proved well worth the wait. Constructed primarily from aluminum and lightweight composites with a steel rollcage, the *XJ220* has a race-bred 3.5-liter twin-turbo V-6 nestled amidships. Even with dual three-way catalytic converters, this 542-horsepower all-alloy wonder has pushed the XJ220 to a top speed of 212 mph, faster than any supercar in the world today. The XJ220's luxurious interior features a full array of power-assisted amenities and a state-of-the-art sound system. Only 350 will be built, with production to start in early '92 at the JaguarSport facility in Oxfordshire, England.





Paula Abdul
Spellbound
(Virgin) 73320

Van Halen: **For Unlawful Carnal Knowledge** (Warner Bros.) **10016**
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Francesca Beghè (SBK) **11119**
The Farm: Spartacus (Reprise/Sire) **14672**
Faith No More: The Real Thing (Reprise) **63719**
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Van Halen (Warner Bros.) **14620**
The B-52's: Cosmic Thing (Reprise) **14742**
Paula Abdul: Shut Up And Dance (The Dance Mixes) (Virgin) **80326**
Van Morrison: Astral Weeks (Warner Bros.) **53574∗**
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Badlands: Voodoo Highway (Titanium/Atlantic) **74170**
America: History (Greatest Hits) (Warner Bros.) **23757**
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Squeeze: Play (Reprise) **70549**
Londonbeat: In The Blood (MCA) **44569**
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Damn Yankees (Warner Bros.) **14852**
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Teddy Pendergrass: Truly Blessed (Elektra) **14879**
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Tangerine Dream: Melrose (Private Music) **10724∗**
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Willie Nelson: Greatest Hits & Rare Tracks (Rhino) **63284**
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Ali Akbar Khan: Journey (Triloka) **11987**

R.E.M.: Out Of Time (Warner Bros.) **24762**
Seal (Warner Bros.) **61992**
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4 ☐ **POP/SOFT ROCK** Madonna, Elton John
5 ☐ **CLASSICAL** Luciano Pavarotti, Vladimir Horowitz
6 ☐ **JAZZ** Kenny G, George Benson
7 ☐ **HEAVY METAL** AC/DC, Slaughter

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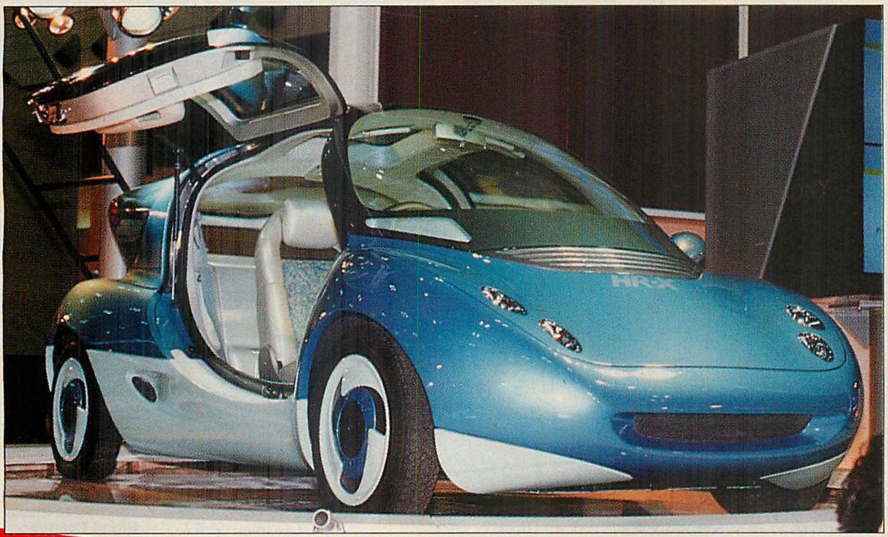
TRENDS

TOKYO SHOW

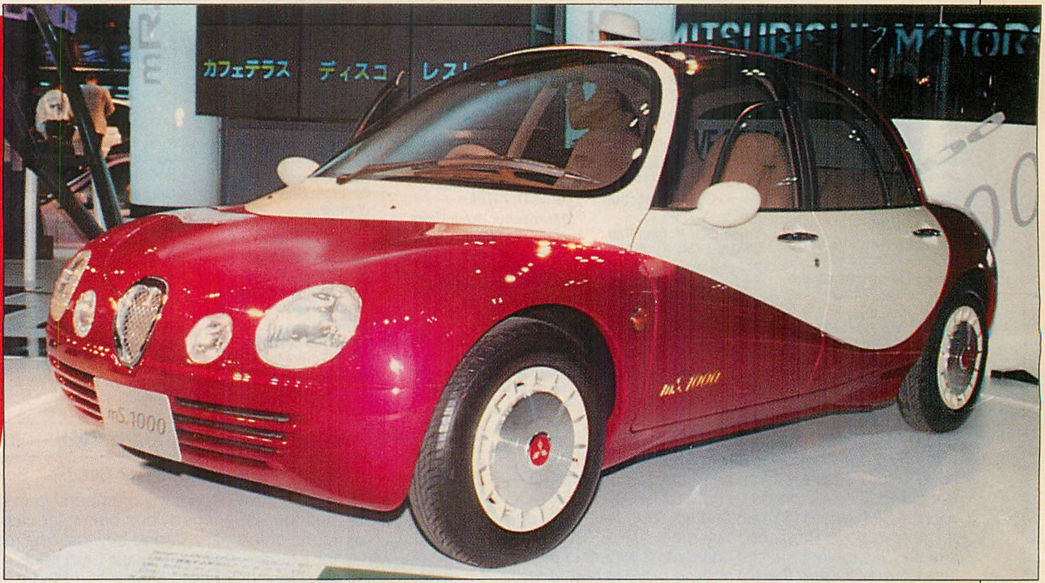


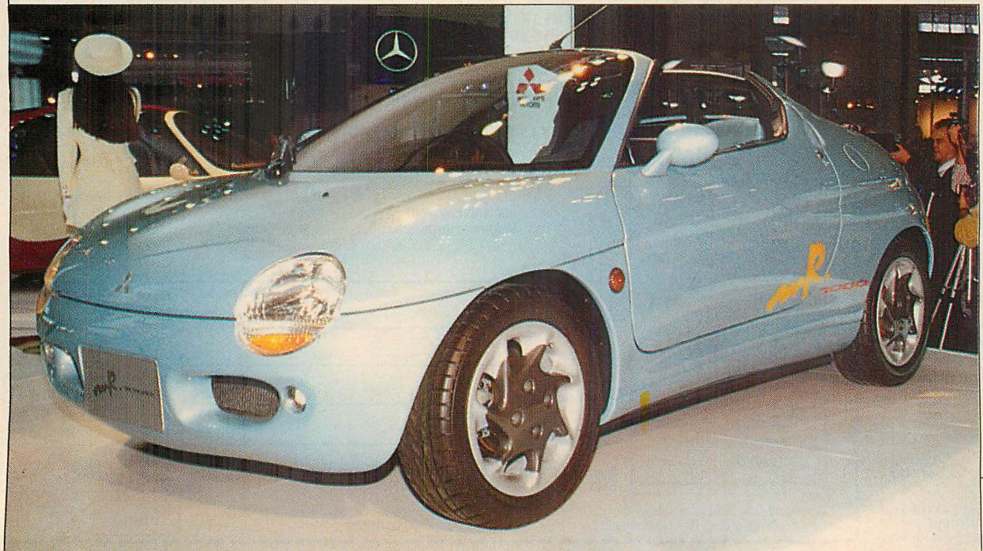
MAZDA HR-X

Calling it "an ideal urban commuter for the 21st century," Mazda showed the experimental HR-X. A twin-chamber 1-liter rotary engine in this lightweight mini runs on hydrogen fuel and is targeted to produce 100 horsepower. The 2+2 HR-X wraps its fiber-resin plastic body panels over an aluminum space frame.

MITSUBISHI MS1000

Mitsubishi's prototype mS1000 represents a unique approach toward a four-passenger mini-sedan. Drivetrain for the organically shaped three-door is a featherweight 82-horsepower 1-liter DOHC four paired with a four-speed automatic. Other techno highpoints include an all-aluminum suspension, low-speed counter-phase four-wheel steering, dual front airbags, extensive use of recycled and recyclable materials, and upper body paint that changes color as the ambient temperature rises or falls.



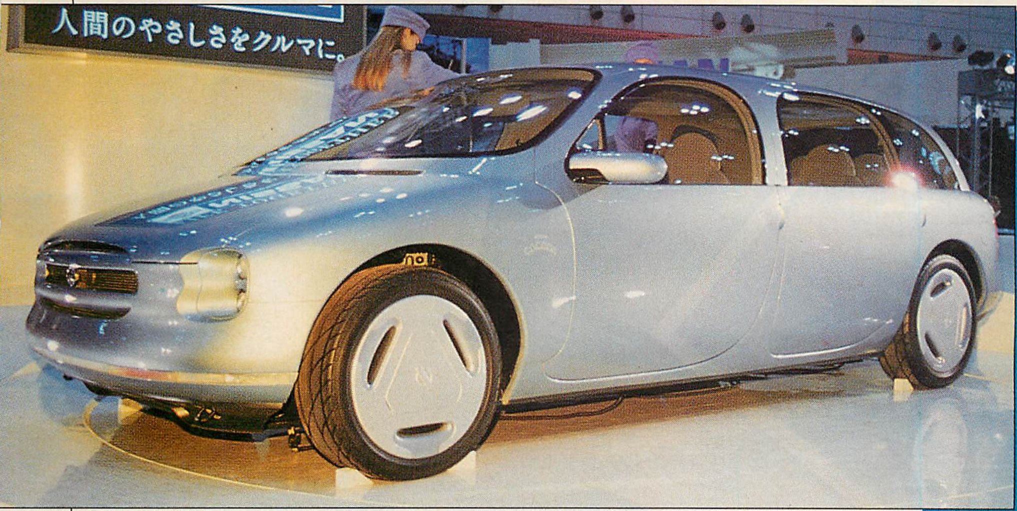


MITSUBISHI MR1000

Although it shares many drivetrain, suspension, and safety components with the mS1000, the sportier and more compact mR1000 runabout offers maximum open-air enjoyment for two. To optimize dynamic balance, the seats are fixed and the dash and pedals move to accommodate different sized drivers.

TRENDS

TOKYO SHOW

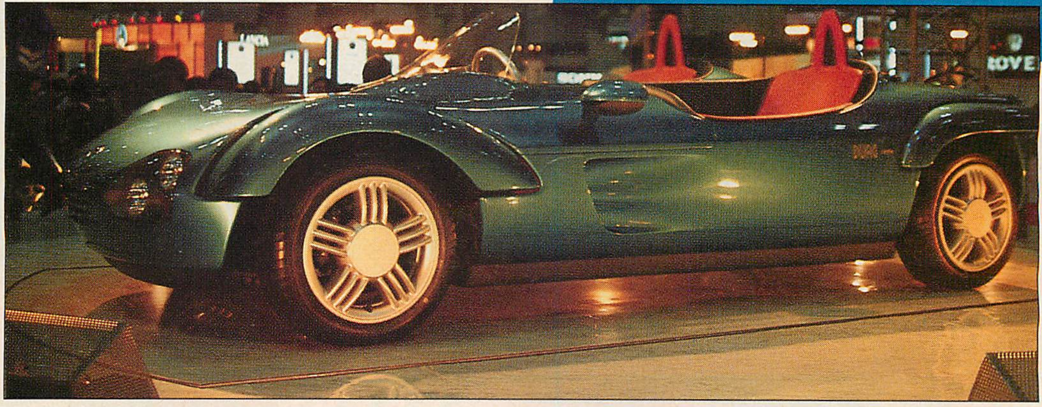


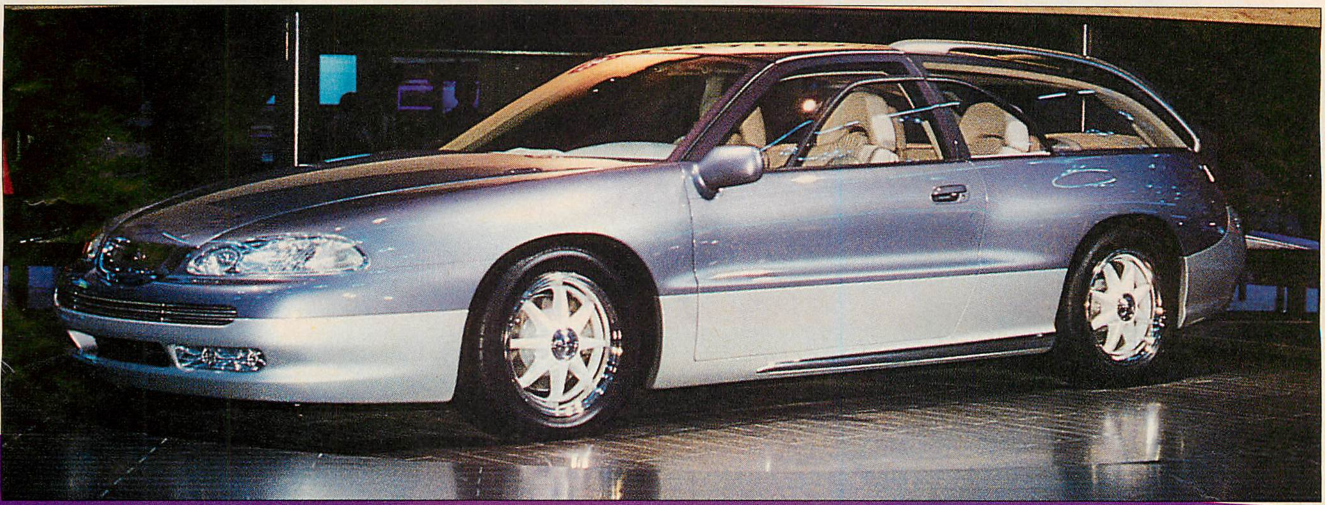
NISSAN COCOON

Designed at its NDI facility in Southern California, Nissan's futuristic Cocoon concept sedan provides a comfortable yet intimate environment for up to six people in a 3x2 configuration. In addition to electrorheological fluid engine mounts, active noise cancellation package, and fingerprint reader doorlocks, the Cocoon has a drowsiness warning alarm that buzzes and emits a "refreshing scent" when it senses a driver may be falling asleep behind the wheel.

NISSAN DUAD

Having a side/midship layout for its 1-liter engine, the two-place Nissan Duad prototype offers a new twist on the mini-sport theme. Weighing just over 1000 pounds, the Duad is said to elicit the same visceral excitement and unity between man and machine that one feels when riding a motorcycle.





SUBARU AMADEUS

A classy sport wagon derivative of the new SVX coupe, the Amadeus concept vehicle combines performance, style, and technology in a stunning package. The all-wheel-drive, all-wheel-steer Amadeus is fitted with a 280-horsepower 3.3-liter naturally aspirated flat-six, electronically controlled five-speed automatic transmission, sophisticated traction control package, head-up instrument display, and GPS navigation system.

Buckle up—together we can save lives.

HAVE YOU EVER TURNED A CURVE INTO A SMILE?

HAVE YOU DRIVEN A FORD LATELY?

The sign up ahead says "S-curve." Your pulse says, "Let's dance." So you grip the wheel. You downshift. And then, just like clockwork, the smile comes. It's all part of the experience we affectionately call Ford Escort GT.

FEEL-GOOD PERFORMANCE.
The fun starts with a 1.8L 16-valve dual overhead cam engine, capable of producing 127 horsepower at 6500 rpm. And to help you keep your grip (as well as your grin), we also gave Escort GT an independent sport handling suspension, power rack-and-pinion steering, and four-wheel disc brakes. Finish it all off with an asymmetrical front grille, rear spoiler, and sporty ground effects, and you've got one eye-catching GT. The kind that's sure to give you a few more smiles per hour.

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New 36-month/36,000-mile limited warranty requires *no deductible.* See your dealer for a copy.

NEW ESCORT
GT

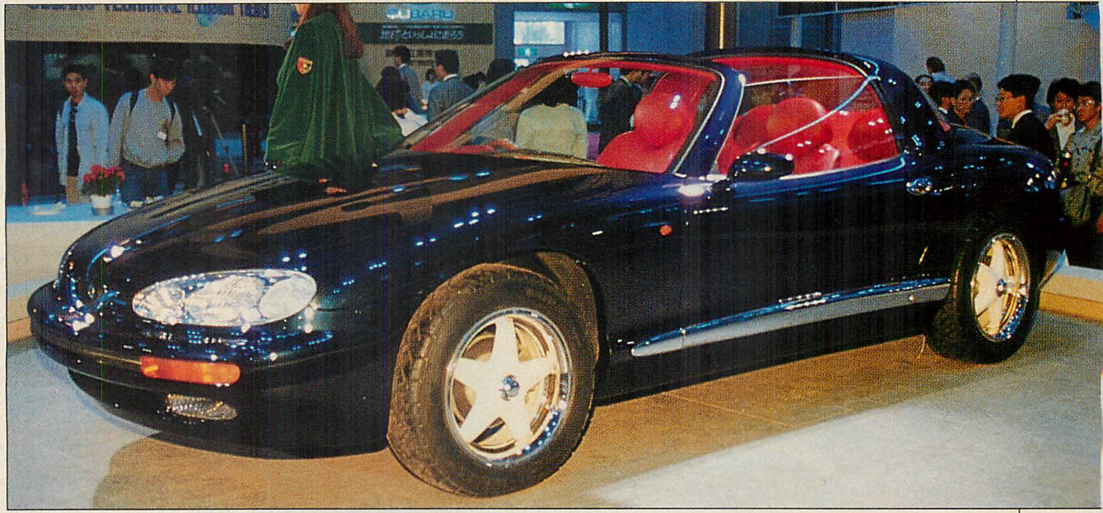
Ford

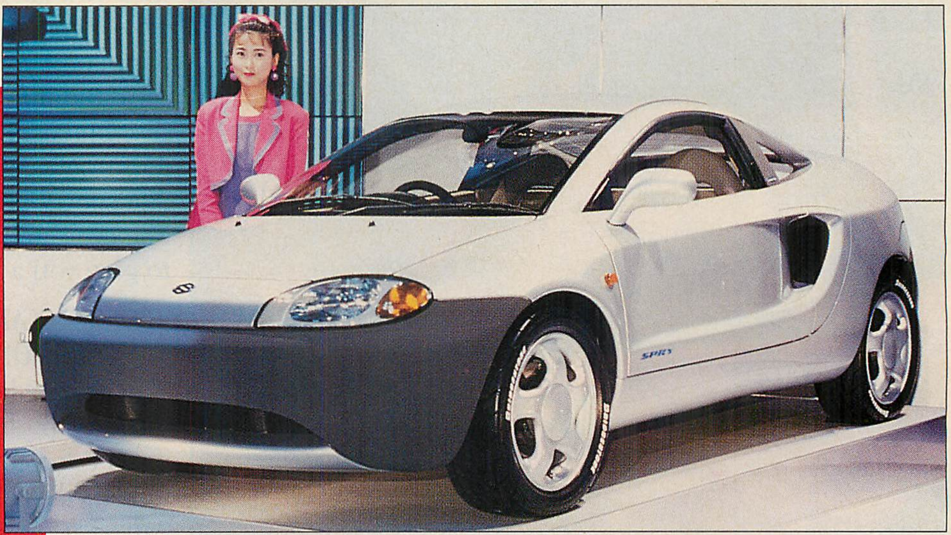
TRENDS

TOKYO SHOW

SUBARU RIOMA

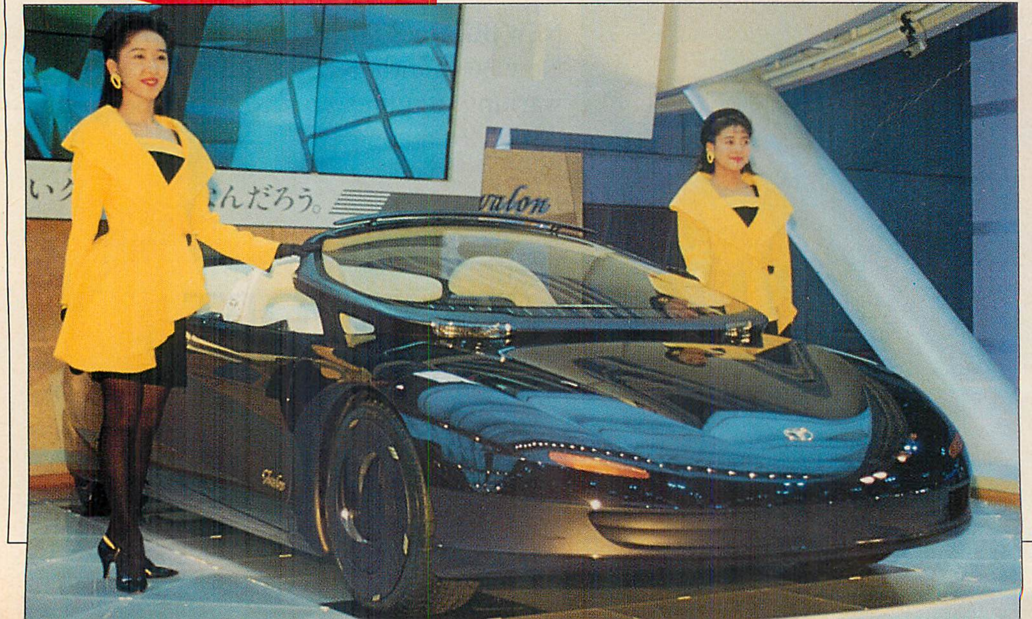
Subaru's targa-topped Rioma blends classical styling elements with contemporary flair. This two-seat one-off has a 2-liter turbocharged twin-cam flat-four underhood that can develop up to 280 horsepower when burning an 85/15 percent methanol/gasoline mix. This is matched with a five-speed dual-range manual transmission and a Subaru all-wheel-drive system. With its thick wood-rimmed steering wheel and red-on-white analog gauges, the Rioma's interior evokes memories of Mercedes' classic 300SL.





SUZUKI SPRY

Powered by a 1.3-liter twin-cam four coupled to a six-speed manual gearbox, the mid-engined Suzuki Spry prototype is a lightweight two-seat sportster that has real production possibilities. The 1740-pound Spry has fully independent suspension, all-wheel disc brakes, and big 195/50 tires on 15-inch alloy wheels.



TOYOTA AVALON

Designed at Toyota's Calty facility in Southern California, the Avalon concept car is characterized as a "socializing cruiser." On the road, the low-slung Avalon offers luxurious trappings for four, its futuristic interior highlighted by lounge-type bucket seats and a large multidisplay unit in the dash. When parked, the Avalon's windshield lowers and matches up with a pair of articulated panels to completely secure the passenger compartment.

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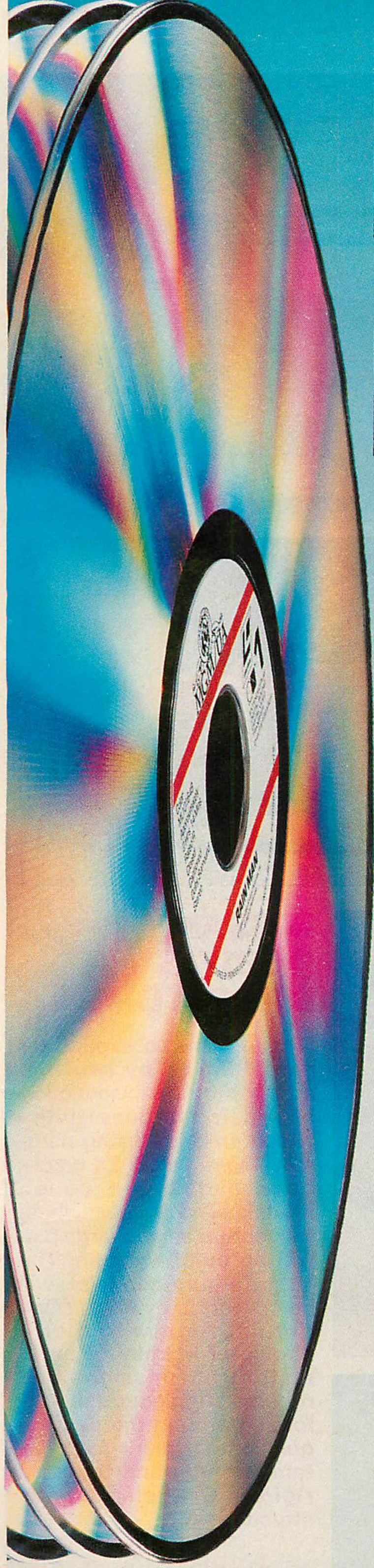

BRUCE WILLIS
DIE HARD 2

Die Hard 2*
0418062

Home Alone*
1042082

The Godfather

The Godfather
0008022

Star Wars*
0564082

Ghost*
8260082

DOUGLAS
TURNER
DeVITO
THE WAR OF THE ROSES

The War of the Roses*
0339022

THE ABYSS	*	8811022
BACKDRAFT	*	5590052
THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK	*	0910092
KINDERGARTEN COP		5234072
RETURN OF THE JEDI	*	3547042
BACK TO THE FUTURE	*	2114092
BACK TO THE FUTURE II	*	9213042
BACK TO THE FUTURE III	*	4970082
HARRY CONNICK, JR. : SINGIN' & SWINGIN'		9681072
BIRD ON A WIRE	*	4973052
BULL DURHAM		2360002
BEN-HUR (1959)	*	2603072
CITIZEN KANE (REMASTERED)		9111072
IT'S A MAD, MAD, MAD, MAD WORLD		0580082
QUIGLEY DOWN UNDER	*	7151022
PRESUMED INNOCENT	*	9621002
THE MAN WHO WOULD BE KING	*	0858032
ROMANCING THE STONE		0894092
BATMAN (1989)	*	6425042
THE BLUES BROTHERS		2117062
THE GRIFTERS		3830002
PREDATOR		3649012
THE RIGHT STUFF		6043062
ALIEN		0002082
ALIENS		3609092
2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY		0025012
DUNE		2111022
EXCALIBUR		6021022
BLUE VELVET	*	5150072
SCARFACE (1983)		2168042
SUPERMAN: THE MOVIE	*	0013052
SUPERMAN II		6015002
AN AMERICAN TAIL		2184042
JAWS		1000082
ROBOCOP		2350022
AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON		7140062
DIRTY DANCING		4955072
DARKMAN		4981052
F/X		6502002
Q & A		3807092
BILLY JOEL: EYE OF THE STORM		9683052
DOCTOR ZHIVAGO	*	0026002
THE COLOR PURPLE	*	6301032
RAIN MAN		2869062
TANGO & CASH	*	6474042
PATTON	*	0043092
THE SOUND OF MUSIC	*	0039052
TOTAL RECALL		2276032
THE WIZARD OF OZ (ANNIV. ED)		2941082

GOODFELLAS		9698082
E.T. : THE EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL	*	6811062
PREDATOR 2	*	1043072
HENRY & JUNE		4993012
LETHAL WEAPON		6308062
LETHAL WEAPON 2	*	6427022
BORN ON THE FOURTH OF JULY	*	4891042
HARD TO KILL		9535052
NATIONAL LAMPOON'S ANIMAL HOUSE		2115082
FIDDLER ON THE ROOF	*	0551032
ONCE UPON A TIME IN AMERICA		6058082
THE DEER HUNTER	*	2124072
THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL		0576042
AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS		6036052
THE AFRICAN QUEEN		0511022
AMERICAN GRAFFITI		2113002
THE EXORCIST		6003042
THE BIBLE	*	0747082
ROAD WARRIOR		6028052
BLUE STEEL (1990)		6965002
HOW THE WEST WAS WON	*	2669082
OUT OF AFRICA		2131082
BEETLEJUICE		6330082
THE LAND BEFORE TIME		5822052
NEXT OF KIN		6472062
HELLO DOLLY	*	0609052
LIONHEART		5245042
EDWARD SCISSORHANDS		1046042
ANGEL HEART		7956092
CINEMA PARADISO (SUBTITLED)		3815092
THE GHOST & MRS. MUIR		8805002
JACOB'S LADDER		2303002
HARVEY		9217002
L.A. STORY		2310012
IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE		4079082
JEZEBEL		0729002
NATIONAL LAMPOON'S VACATION		6039022
NATIONAL LAMPOON'S CHRISTMAS VACATION		9525072
REVERSAL OF FORTUNE		9697092
THE RUNNING MAN		4956062
BEVERLY HILLS COP		2053022
WAR OF THE WORLDS		2094032
CHINATOWN	*	2025072
SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY		1053042
THE DOORS	*	2325042
CAROUSEL	*	0338032

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27/S92

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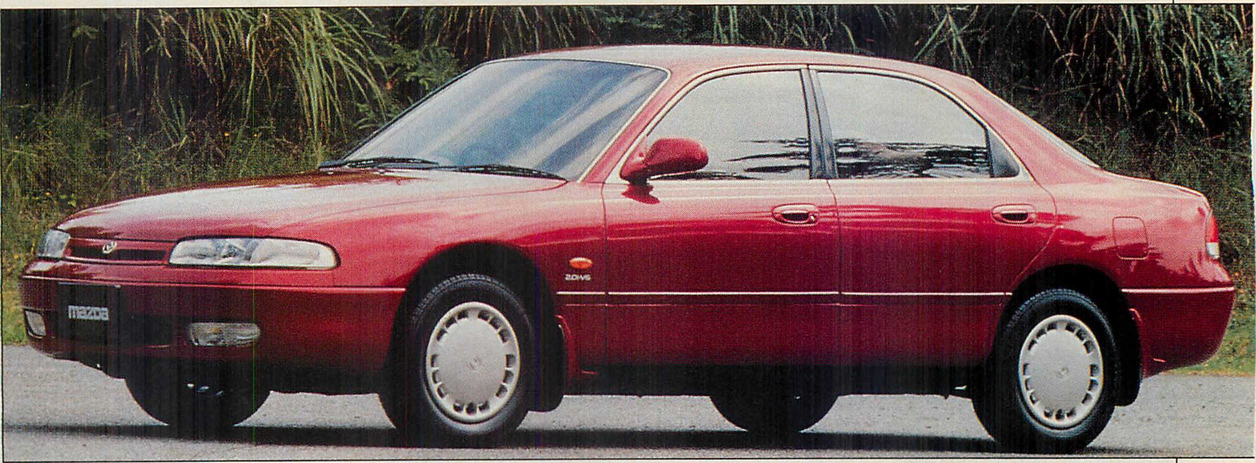
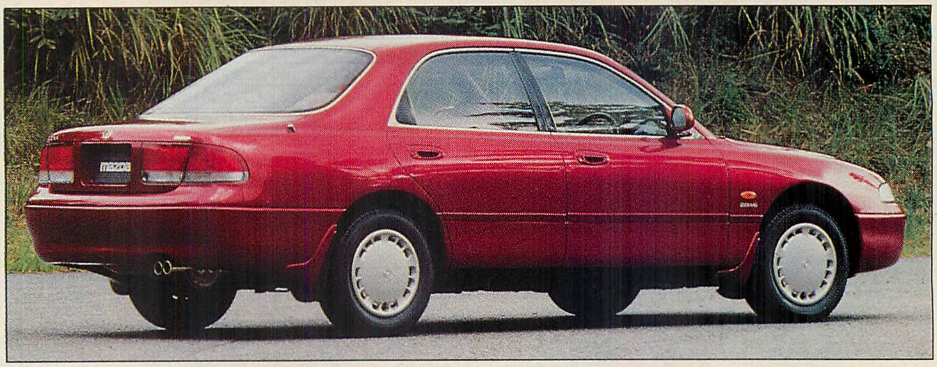
TRENDS

INTERNATIONAL REPORT

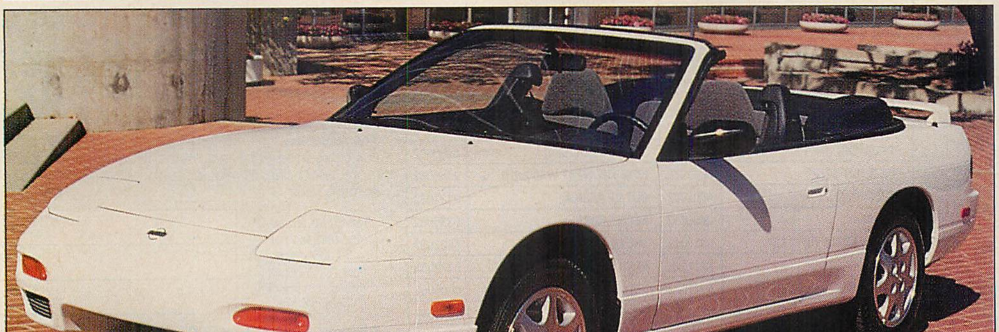
by Phillip Bingham

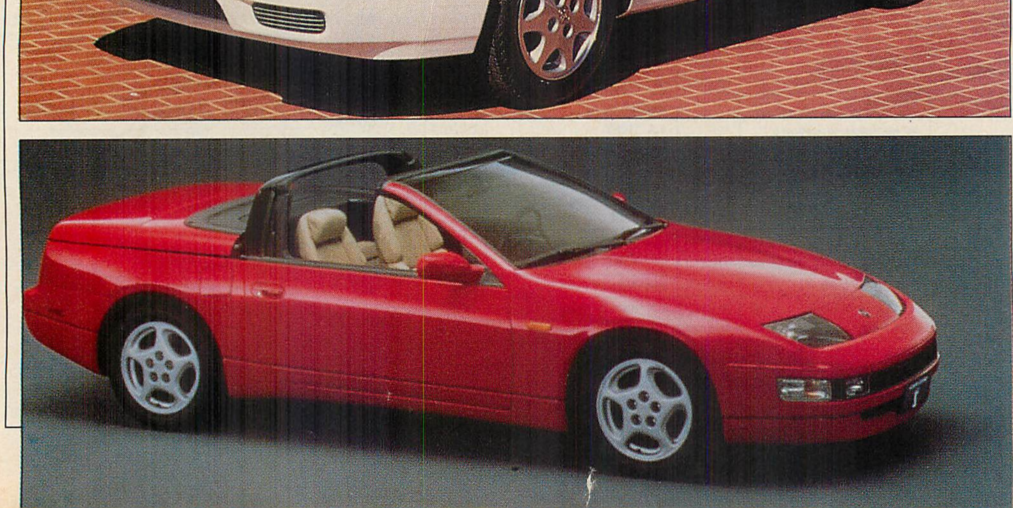


NEW 626 ON TAP



Later this year, Mazda will introduce a replacement for the current 626. The successor will be based on the Chronos sedan, which went on sale in Japan last *fall*. Engine choices in the U.S. are expected to include a 2.0-liter DOHC inline four and a 2.5-liter twin-cam V-6. To be built in Mazda's Flat Rock, Michigan, facility, this latest iteration will retain the basic front-drive platform configuration, but offer a slightly roomier and more aerodynamic package.





NISSAN DEBUTS DROP-TOPS

Nissan plans to expand its model lineup by two this spring with the introduction of a pair of convertibles based on the existing naturally aspirated 300ZX hatchback and 240SX coupe models. The former, which will feature a fixed targa bar, will be built in Japan. The *latter*, a pure cabriolet, will be converted by ASC in California. Both will offer a choice of manual or automatic transmissions and receive supplemental reinforcing around the passenger compartment to maintain strength and torsional rigidity in their unibody structures.

TRENDS

INTERNATIONAL REPORT

EXPRESS DELIVERY

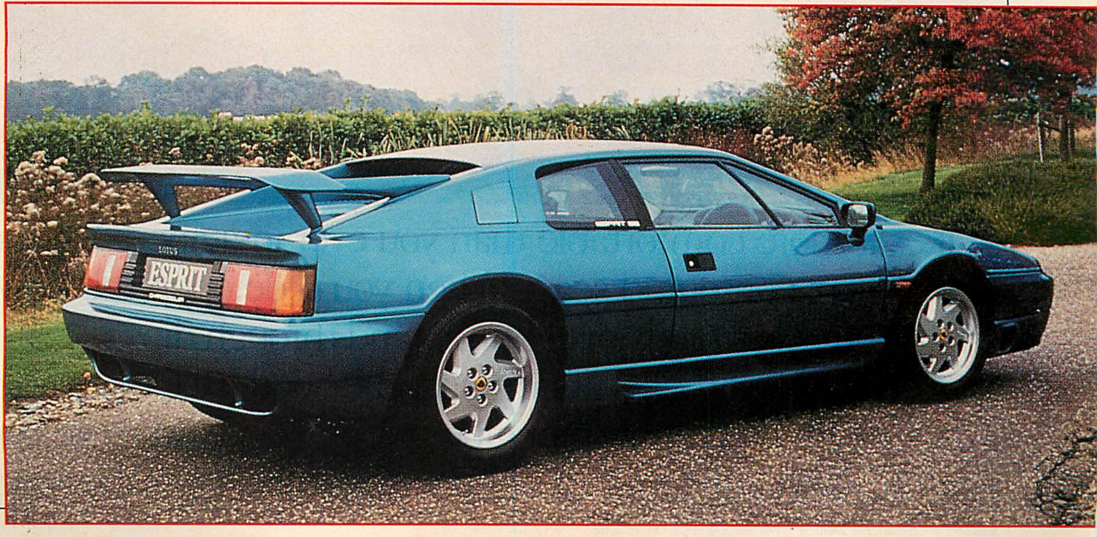
BMW recently announced its range of 5-series Touring wagons will soon be expanded to include this stunning M5 variant. Equipped with a 315-horsepower 3.5-liter DOHC inline-six engine and a full M-Sport suspension package, the handsome high-speed hauler has a top speed of 155 mph. The M5 Touring is expected to go on sale in Europe within a year. So far, there are no plans to bring the M5 wagon to the U.S. market.

LOTUS IMPROVES ESPRIT

By making a number of small alterations to its Esprit, Lotus has faced up to a big issue: Buyers of mid-engined supercars now realize, since the advent of Acura's NSX, they don't *have* to tolerate "eccentricities" any more.

Ensuring that the bottom of the Esprit's new tailwing is higher than the top of its rear window, Lotus has opened up visibility and improved the car's handling balance, stability, and aerodynamic efficiency. The company claims a reduction in drag from 0.34 Cd to 0.33 (raising top speed from 163 to 165 mph) and a mellowing of the on-the-limit tendency toward understeer.

Bigger drivers now have a better chance of comfortably exploiting the Lotus' performance: A repackaged cabin provides 1.6 inches *more leg room*, 5.5 inches more head room, 2.1 inches more seat width, and 3.2 inches more clearance between seat and steering wheel, while a lower, narrower central tunnel affords more elbow room. The doors also have been amended to open wider by 15 degrees, and fancy footwork is encouraged by lighter and shorter pedal movements.



IMPORT NOTES

It's a Record: By averaging 103.1 imperial mpg (85.85 U.S. mpg), Daihatsu's Charade has won a place in the *Guinness Book of Records*. With three people and their luggage onboard, the 993-cubic-centimeter three-cylinder turbocharged diesel car circumnavigated Guinness' official 3621-mile " 'Round Britain" route on only 35.15 gallons, bettering the existing best by nearly 10 mpg... **Dedicated Follower of Fashion?** To keep pace with the trend toward lower and slopier hoodlines (and, of course, to achieve even more exemplary performance), Mercedes-Benz will develop a new range of V-6s for its 200 and 300-series models. With four-valve cylinder heads, they'll initially displace 2.8 and 3.2 liters...**Welcome Arrival:** Ford of Europe, long criticized for its models' underhood coarseness, has unveiled a totally new generation of four-cylinder powerplants. Designed and developed in Britain and Germany under the codename Zeta, they're twin-cam 16-valve units. Two 1.8-liter variants go on sale first in the Escort; 1.6- and 2.0-liter versions follow in '93...**International Accord:** Honda of Japan and Rover of Britain have signed a new Memorandum of Understanding, strengthening their cooperation. For the '93 model year, they'll each produce a jointly developed medium-size car, codenamed Synchro; two years later, the Honda Concerto/Rover 200 will be replaced. Honda has a 20-percent shareholding in Rover Group, Rover a 20-percent stake in Honda U.K. Manufacturing.

When's the last car chase that

It was as if a starter's gun had been fired.

The year was 1976, and the Honda Accord arrived much to the delight of America's drivers and critics. And much to the dismay of other automotive designers and engineers.

After all, this was a car with a totally different interpretation of efficiency, comfort and performance. An automobile so thoughtful, practical and complete in its design, the competition had no other choice than to follow in its tracks.

Now, more than a decade and a half later, the Accord continues to perform an amazing feat. Each year, it somehow improves.

For instance, the interior. It's surprisingly large, and amazingly quiet. Which makes it more comfortable than you ever imagined. You'll notice it when you sit in the firm, contoured seats. When you slide open the power moonroof. And when you ride silently over bumps and through dips.

The refinements underneath the hood have been equally dramatic. A fuel-injected, 140-horsepower engine gives the Accord more power than ever before. And the 4-wheel double wishbone suspension translates into tremendously agile

Accord EX model shown and described. © 1991 American Honda Motor Co., Inc.

time you saw a lasted 17 years?

handling. The result is truly amazing. You can respond confidently to virtually any driving situation you might encounter.

This car also excels in safety. A driver's side airbag is now standard. Along with a sophisticated anti-lock braking system to help you control the car on rain-slick surfaces. You can actually steer the car while braking.

The body is also quite enviable. The lines are clean and smooth. The fit and finish are consistently excellent.

Not surprisingly, workmanship like this has produced a bounty of rewards. The Accord has been the best-selling car in the U.S. for the past two years. And it consistently appears on all the "top 10" lists for cars in its category.

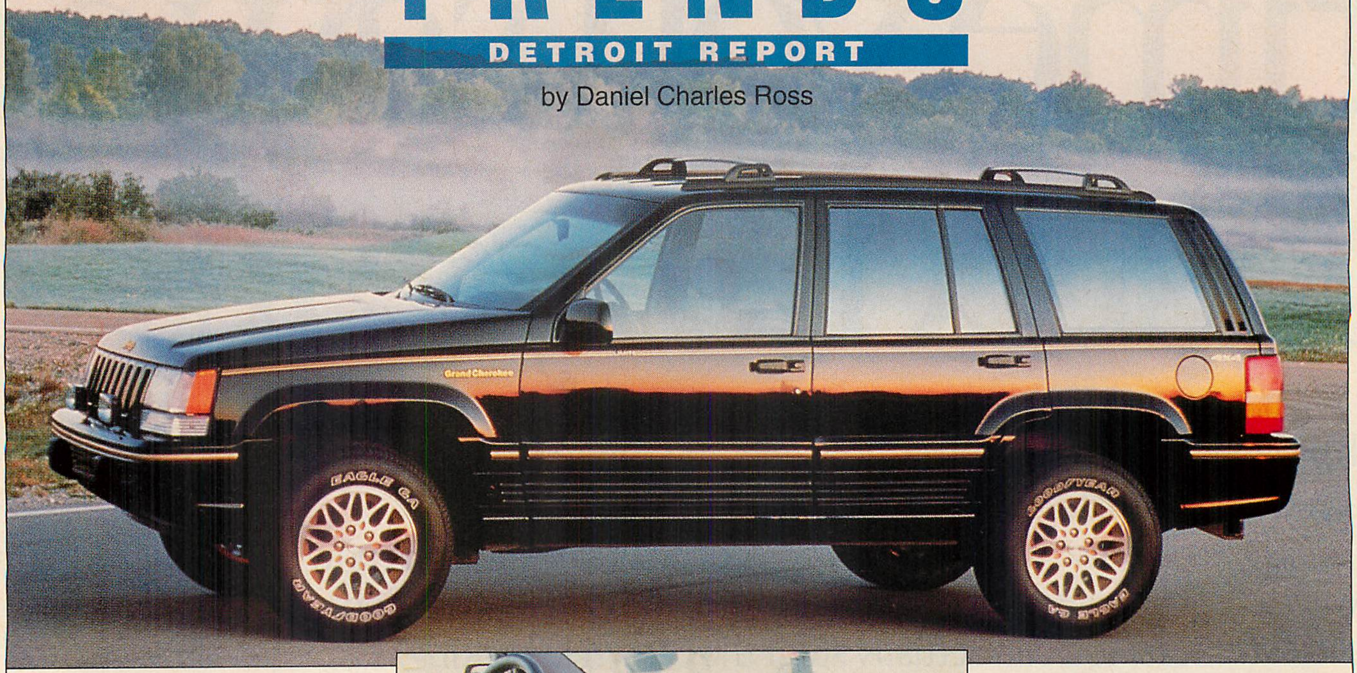
Considering all these facts, one comes to a rather obvious conclusion. The Accord has always been, and continues to be, a true industry standard. The car by which all others in its class are measured and judged.

And while the competition remains relentless in their quest to catch us, we remain dedicated to building a car that's a few years ahead of them. Which means this chase might be just getting started, after all. The Accord EX. HONDA

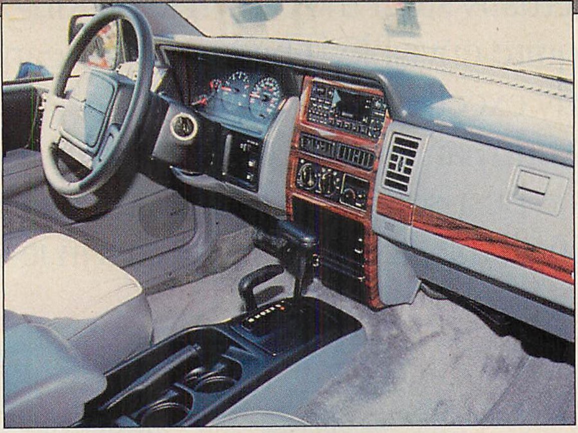
TRENDS

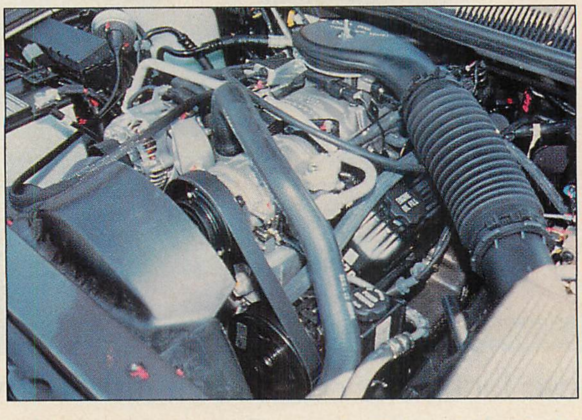
DETROIT REPORT

by Daniel Charles Ross



JEEP REVEALS ALL-NEW GRAND CHEROKEE





Jeep took the Saran Wrap covers off its all-new '92 "ZJ" Cherokee line Nov. 25, bringing to official light perhaps the 11th worst-kept secret in modern history. Die-hard fans of the current truck needn't begin gnashing their teeth: In a rather surprise turn, Jeep said it will continue to offer the current boxier Cherokee style, to be sold as a low-cost "entry-level" vehicle.

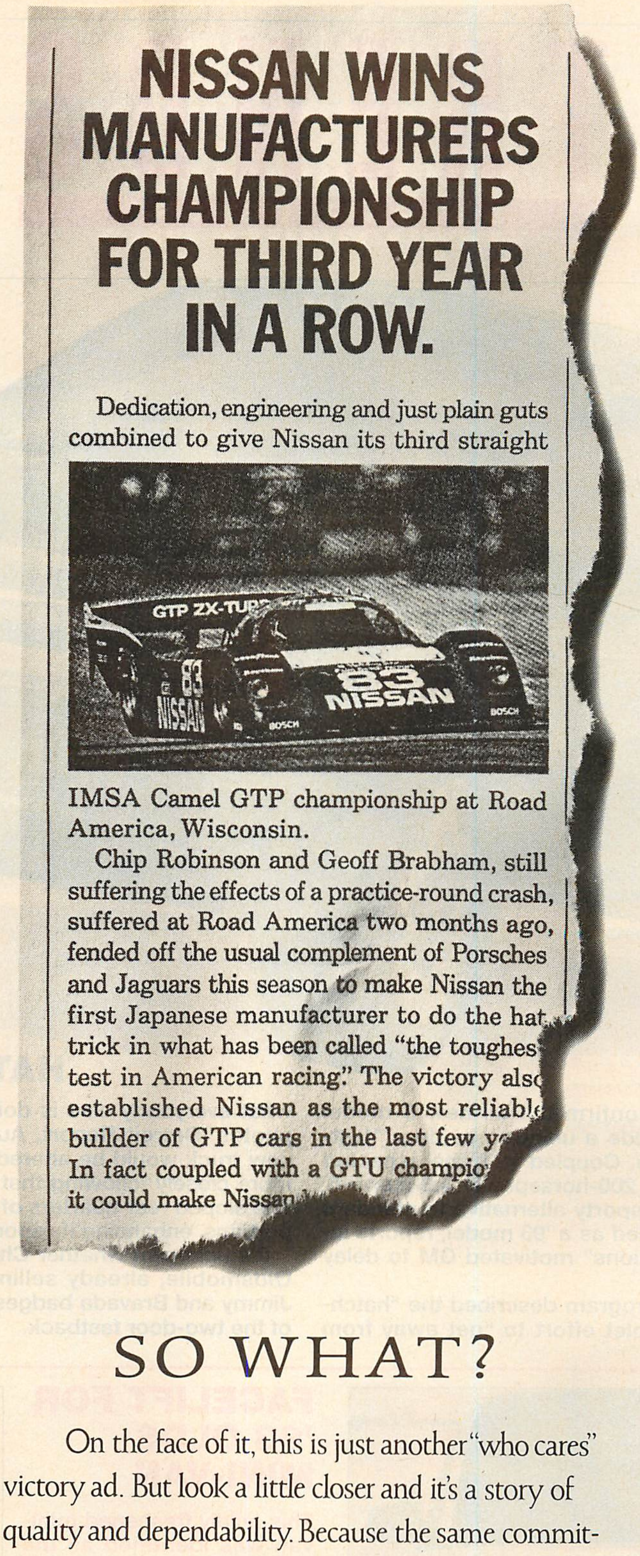
We drove a ZJ mule some months ago at a background briefing, and it's clear the new Cherokee is aimed squarely at the rounded metal shoulders of Ford's Explorer line. The new Jeep, to go on sale in April or May, slightly improves upon the ground-pounding abilities it's always possessed, but impressively redraws the all-new interior cell for better passenger comfort and greater cargo capacity. The sheetmetal is also all new, though new in the same way as last year's mini-van update: Every panel is freshened, but the vehicle is clearly still a Cherokee.

Here are the principal dimensional changes: Wheelbase is increased 4.5 inches and overall length 8 inches, so the interior opens up more room for live and inanimate cargo. Front hip room is up 1.7 inches and rear hip room up 5 inches (principally due to the movement rearward of the rear wheelhouses); front shoulder room improves by 3 inches and rear shoulder room by 2.3 inches. Overall cargo space increases 7.4 cubic feet, and it's easier to access through a 4.3-inch wider rear door, even though overall vehicle width is reduced 0.8 inch.

The Grand Cherokee, blending the brand recognition of the Cherokee sport/utility with the big-luxury cues of the discontinued Grand Wagoneer, is the top truck line, and as such, is expected to retail between $19,000 and $30,000. In this price league, however, like the Ford Explorer, Oldsmobile Bravada, and current Cherokee Limited (Sept. '91), standard equipment content is high; it includes four-wheel anti-lock brakes, air conditioning, uplevel stereo choices, power-operated amenities, and what Jeep claims is the first driver-side airbag in a sport/utility vehicle.

No two-door models are planned, and all vehicles will be built with one of Jeep's three all-wheel-drive schemes. A proposal to build a Dodge version of the truck was quietly shelved some months ago after an outcry from Jeep/Eagle dealers, but *Automotive News* said the Dodge model was developed and will be sold in '94 if Grand Cherokee sales fail to keep the factory churning fast enough.

Ride quality and handling characteristics in the five-speed mule we drove were quite good, especially considering that the truck was an engineering test bed. On the road, the Grand Cherokee ride is more supple and less choppy than the current vehicle, eliminating some shake and lots of impact harshness. Off-road, it digs in the dirt with traditional Jeep tenacity.


GTP ZX-TUR
83
NISSAN
BOSCH

NISSAN WINS MANUFACTURERS CHAMPIONSHIP FOR THIRD YEAR IN A ROW.

Dedication, engineering and just plain guts combined to give Nissan its third straight IMSA Camel GTP championship at Road America, Wisconsin.

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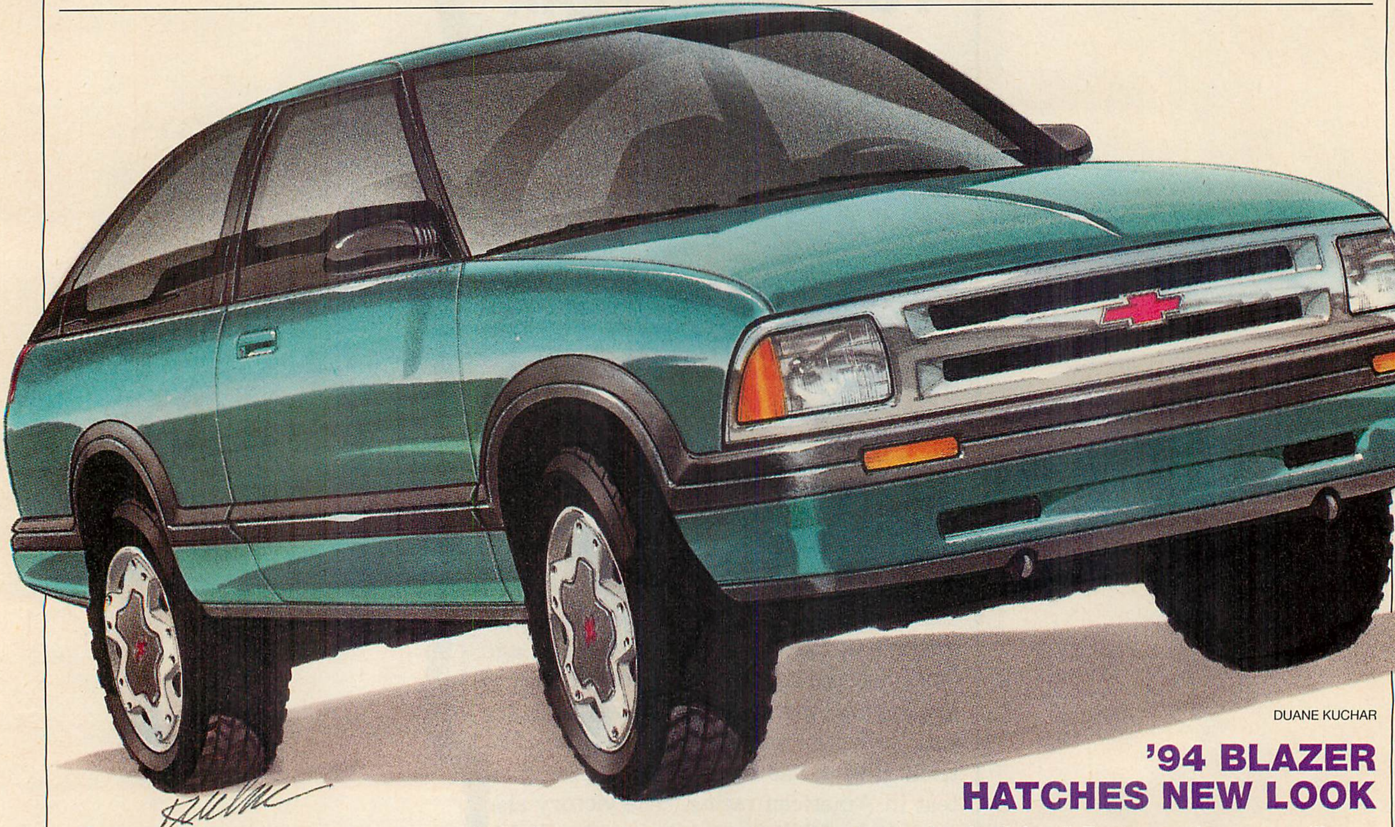
TRENDS

DETROIT REPORT



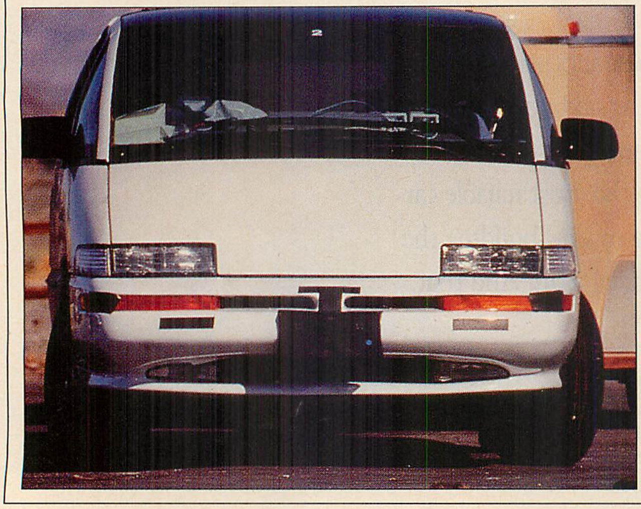
DUANE KUCHAR

'94 BLAZER HATCHES NEW LOOK

General Motors sources confirm the all-new S-model baby Blazer line will include a unique two-door "fastback" model for the first time. Coupled with the expected continued availability of GM's 200-horsepower 4.3-liter V-6, the new Blazer look will be a sporty alternative to standard sport/utilities. Originally intended as a '93 model, reports indicate "poor economic conditions" motivated GM to delay the vehicle a year.

A source familiar with the program described the "hatchback" body style as a Chevrolet effort to "get away from what everybody else is doing." From previous surveillance photos (Detroit Report, Aug. '91), it already was clear the new truck would be altered to include an aerodynamic look more closely following that of Chevy's full-size work trucks. The sloped rear quarters of the new style may include lift-off portions, enhancing its sportiness and utility.

It's unknown whether Chevrolet sister divisions GMC and Oldsmobile, already selling baby Blazers under the S-15 Jimmy and Bravada badges, will get brand-specific versions of the two-door fastback.



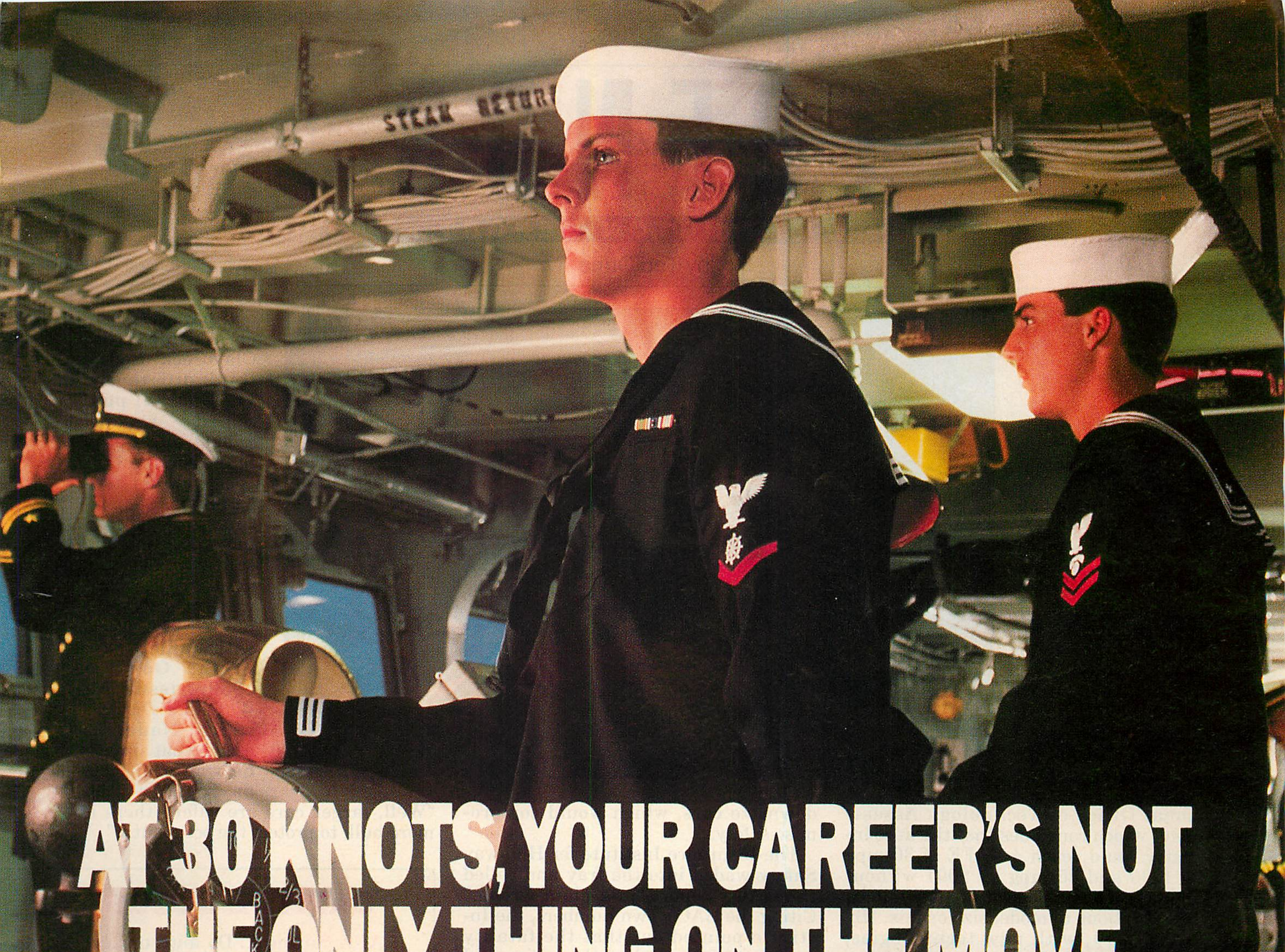
HANS LEHMANN/HIDDEN IMAGE

FACELIFT FOR '93 OLDS MINI-VAN

This mildly freshened mini-van was identified as the facelift of the '93 Oldsmobile Silhouette. Most notable in the redo is that the bottom-breather air intake has been opened considerably. Where the previous intake was a rectangle centered beneath the bumper, the sculpted intake of the '93 model is larger and more efficient, plus lends more distinction and personality.

BRIEFLY NOTED

Now Back to Work! A ceremony was held on Oct. 29 at Pontiac's Wentzville Assembly Center to honor the 30-millionth Pontiac, a white Bonneville SSEi...**See Me in 10 Years:** Chrysler's built its one millionth T-115 mini-van... **What's Italian for *Zoom*?** The inevitable downturn in Chevrolet Corvette ZR-1 sales has led GM's Powertrain Division to consider export sales of the powerhouse 375-horsepower LT5 V-8. Negotiations reportedly are underway with representatives from Modena for the Iso Grifo 90.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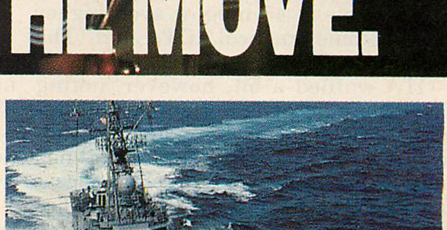
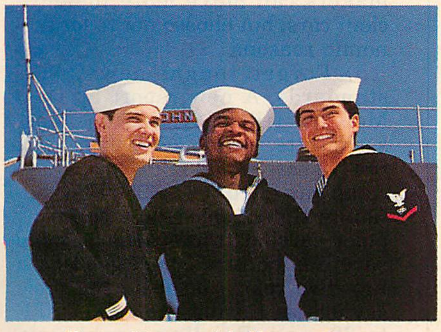


The Navy's hands-on experience provides a variety of high-tech challenges, like working on this guided missile frigate.



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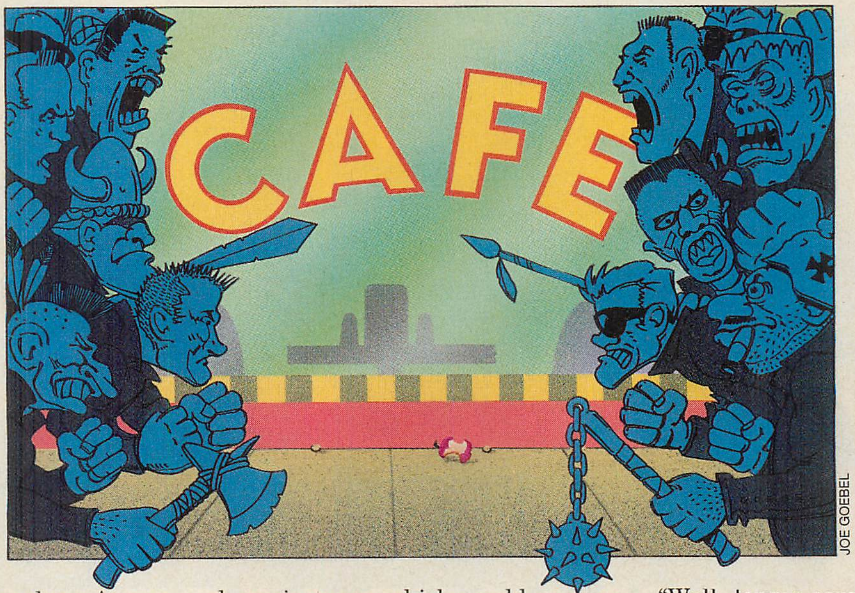
TRENDS

WASHINGTON REPORT

by Ted Orme

CAFE RUMBLE HEATS UP



JOE GOEBEL

The auto fuel-economy debate in Congress has taken on the look of a gang rumble with the addition of two new government reports and a zip-gun attack by Naderites against the Department of Transportation over small-car safety.

The latest guess about how high to raise corporate average fuel economy standards comes from the congressional Office of Technology Assessment, which concludes that the auto industry could reach a CAFE of 30 mpg by 1996 and 35 mpg by 2001 without any major technological breakthroughs or disruptions to model size or mix. "By about 2010, with new technologies, fleet targets of 45 mpg or even higher could become practical," OTA said. The current CAFE standard is 27.5.

OTA waffled a bit, however, noting that "the market is not supporting reduced gasoline use." For example, public lust for higher-performance cars has caused the average 0-60-mph acceleration times to decrease every year since 1982, at a cost of more than 2 mpg in average fuel economy.

The Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association, which speaks for the domestic auto makers, said the OTA report "suffers from the same flaws as previous analyses by being overly optimistic and based on the phase-in of unknown future technologies without regard for economic conditions."

The MVMA was equally critical of a new report by the General Accounting Office that concluded, "automobile weight reductions since the mid-'70s have had virtually no effect on total highway fatalities."

But Sen. Richard Bryan (D-Nev.), who's sponsoring a bill to require a 40-mpg CAFE by 2001, wasted no time using the GAO report to refute claims by the auto and insurance industries that small cars are inherently less safe than large cars. Auto makers have consistently said that the only way to meet a 40-mpg CAFE would be to significantly downsize cars, which would compromise safety.

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety waded into the fray and called the GAO's report "just plain wrong." Citing the GAO's own numbers, the Institute pointed out that the fatality rate is "much higher than it would have been without an increase in the proportion of light cars." It also noted that the GAO "reports extraordinarily high fatality rates for very light cars"—more than 250 percent higher than average for '84-87 models under 1800 pounds.

DOT provided strong evidence to back up this fact in a video of a recent head-on crash test showing a mangled 2000-pound Subaru bouncing off a 4000-pound Ford Crown Victoria like Pee-Wee Herman off Lawrence Taylor (Washington Report, Nov. '91). Videos of this convincing test were extensively used in television advertising by the auto industry-backed Coalition for Vehicle Choice.

But seeing isn't believing to Ralph Nader disciples, Clarence Ditlow III, head of the Center for Auto Safety, and Joan Claybrook, head of Public Citizen, who called a press conference and accused Jerry Ralph Curry, head of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration of deliberately misleading Congress and the public by exaggerating small-car safety risks and cooperating with the CVC to produce the ads. Ditlow and Claybrook claim that small cars can be made both safe and fuel efficient.

As *The Wall Street Journal* pointed out, however, Nader, Ditlow, and Claybrook used to think differently. The Journal published several quotes dug up by Sam Kazman of the Competitive Enterprise Institute in Washington, in which the safety trio clearly said bigger cars were safer. Example: An interview with Ralph Nader in the Oct. 24, 1989, issue of *Woman's Day*, in which Nader is asked what size car he would buy today. Nader said, "Well, larger cars are safer—there is more bulk to protect the occupant..."

CAPITOL NOTES

CAFE Support: Do auto makers have a credibility problem when it comes to convincing Americans they can't meet tough, new fuel-economy standards? Yes, big time, according to a new survey conducted by the American Automobile Association. Of 832 respondents surveyed around the country, nearly 84 percent supported raising the standard from 27.5 to 40 mpg by the year 2001; 69 percent said they believed that if auto manufacturers were required to, they would meet the new standards through better technology, not by making smaller cars; and 76 percent believed auto makers can make more fuel-efficient cars, but choose not to for economic reasons...**Old Car Round-up:** Forget tough, new CAFE standards. A new report by DRI/McGraw Hill of Lexington, Massachusetts, says a $700 bounty on pre-'79 cars would entice owners to scrap one third of the 25 to 30 million gas-guzzling, heavy-polluting older cars out there, which would save 5 billion gallons of gas in the first five years—or about the same savings as raising the 1996 CAFE to 32 mpg. Funding would come from a 2¢-a-gallon gas tax or a tax on new gas guzzlers.

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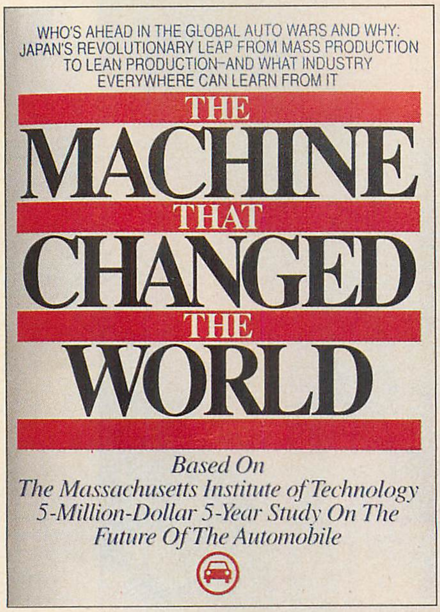
TRENDS

ROVING REPORT

REVIEW

***THE MACHINE THAT CHANGED THE WORLD:* Based on the Massachusetts Institute of Technology 5-Million-Dollar 5-Year Study on the Future of the Automobile, by James P. Womak, Daniel T. Jones, and Daniel Roos. Published by Rawson Associates, Macmillan Publishing Company, 866 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022; 1990. Hardbound; 323 pages, copious charts and graphs, but no photos. ISBN: 0-89256-350-8. $22.50; paperbound, $11.**



WHO'S AHEAD IN THE GLOBAL AUTO WARS AND WHY: JAPAN'S REVOLUTIONARY LEAP FROM MASS PRODUCTION TO LEAN PRODUCTION–AND WHAT INDUSTRY EVERYWHERE CAN LEARN FROM IT

THE MACHINE THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

Based On
The Massachusetts Institute of Technology
5-Million-Dollar 5-Year Study On The
Future Of The Automobile

This work proposes to explain what happened to the U.S. auto industry when the Japanese adapted U.S. production methods to their own unique environment. It also explores the scary prospects of Europe's creaking industry, once the tariff and quota walls come down and the playing field is level at last. It's a scholarly study, with the xenophobia left out, and it's so well written (there's even a plot of sorts) that it's a pleasure to read and difficult to lay down.

The authors, challenged by the rapid changes taking place in worldwide auto manufacturing, formed the International Motor Vehicle Program at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. They needed money, but they needed their independence almost as much, so when they went looking for $5 million to fund the study, they solicited contributions from governments, as well as industry sources, taking no more than 5 percent from any one contributor.

Chapter One provides an overview of where we find ourselves now and what the book is about. Two traces the rise and fall of mass production; Henry Ford predominates here, although Alfred P. Sloan gets honorable mention. At the bottom of page 30, we find: "Ford not only perfected the interchangeable part, he perfected the interchangeable worker."

Chapter Three introduces Lean Production, the real subject of this book. Chapters Four through Eight examine elements of lean production and how to run an automobile factory in such a manner as to produce the best car in the least time at the lowest cost.

Chapters Nine and 10 explain how painful the transition will be for those still embracing archaic mass production and explore the gloomy outlook for all dues-paying members of the once-mighty United Automobile Workers of America.

This study reaches into dealership structure and consumer attitudes, Japan and Europe included. All sorts of questions that have left your consciousness unanswered over the years are raised again and answered here.

In addition to 275 pages of the story, there's an Epilogue, 12 pages of end notes, four appendices, (a) identifying 36 IMVP sponsoring organizations, (b) 58 members of the IMVP Research Affiliate Team, (c) seven pages of IMVP Program and Forum Participants, (d) an 11-page IMVP Publications list, plus a nine-page Index.

If anything in this exhaustive study grabs your attention, there's a lifetime supply of further reference material with which you can chase your favorite topic. —*T C*

FIELD OF GREENS: BUILD THEM, AND BUYERS WILL COME

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Low-emissions flexible-fuel vehicles (FFV) are becoming a reality. At the behest of the California Energy Commission and its chairman, Charles Imbrecht, General Motors has agreed to provide 4000 flexible-fuel 3.1-liter V-6 Lumina VFV (variable-fuel vehicle) models during 1992, with 2000 slated exclusively for the Golden State. Sales of base and Euro-version Lumina VFV models will be coordinated through Chevrolet fleet dealers and the California Energy Commission.

Raising eyebrows is the fact that these low-emissions vehicles represent the first time an automobile manufacturer has offered a mass-produced, flexible-fuel car for sale not only to fleets, but also to the general public. This trend likely will continue in tandem with the expansion of the fledgling methanol infrastructure in coming years.

An important distinction is that a driver of an FFV is not restricted to operating within range of a particular filling station. Such vehicles have proven to run efficiently on either M85 (85 percent methanol, 15 percent gasoline), straight gasoline, or any combination of the two from the same tank. A driver pumps in whatever fuel is convenient or available. A sophisticated fuel sensor automatically detects the mixture and adjusts fuel injection and spark timing for optimum combustion. Key modifications, including the addition of corrosion-resistant fuel system components and high-capacity fuel injectors, are made to safely accommodate methanol fuel. —*Ron Cogan*

DEVELOPMENTS

- Chrysler is expected to offer an FFV variant on its LH platform in 1993. A small fleet of natural gas Dodge vans is currently undergoing field testing.
- Ford also will offer 200 flexible fuel Econoline/Club Wagon vans and 2500 Taurus FFVs to fleets by year's end.
- Southern California Gas Company is expanding its natural gas infrastructure for automobiles. An additional 51 fueling stations are planned for the Southern California area, with an extensive network of 1300 stations envisioned by 2000.
- Natural-gas Sierra pickups built alongside gas models at GMC's Pontiac, Michigan, plant are specially modified for NGV operation at PAS, Inc. No newcomer to the GMC scene, PAS is responsible for much of the work on the Syclone and Typhoon.
- Fleet FFV or NGV buyers enjoy cash incentives and rebates from state agencies and utilities that encourage alternative-fuel vehicle use.

—*R.C.*

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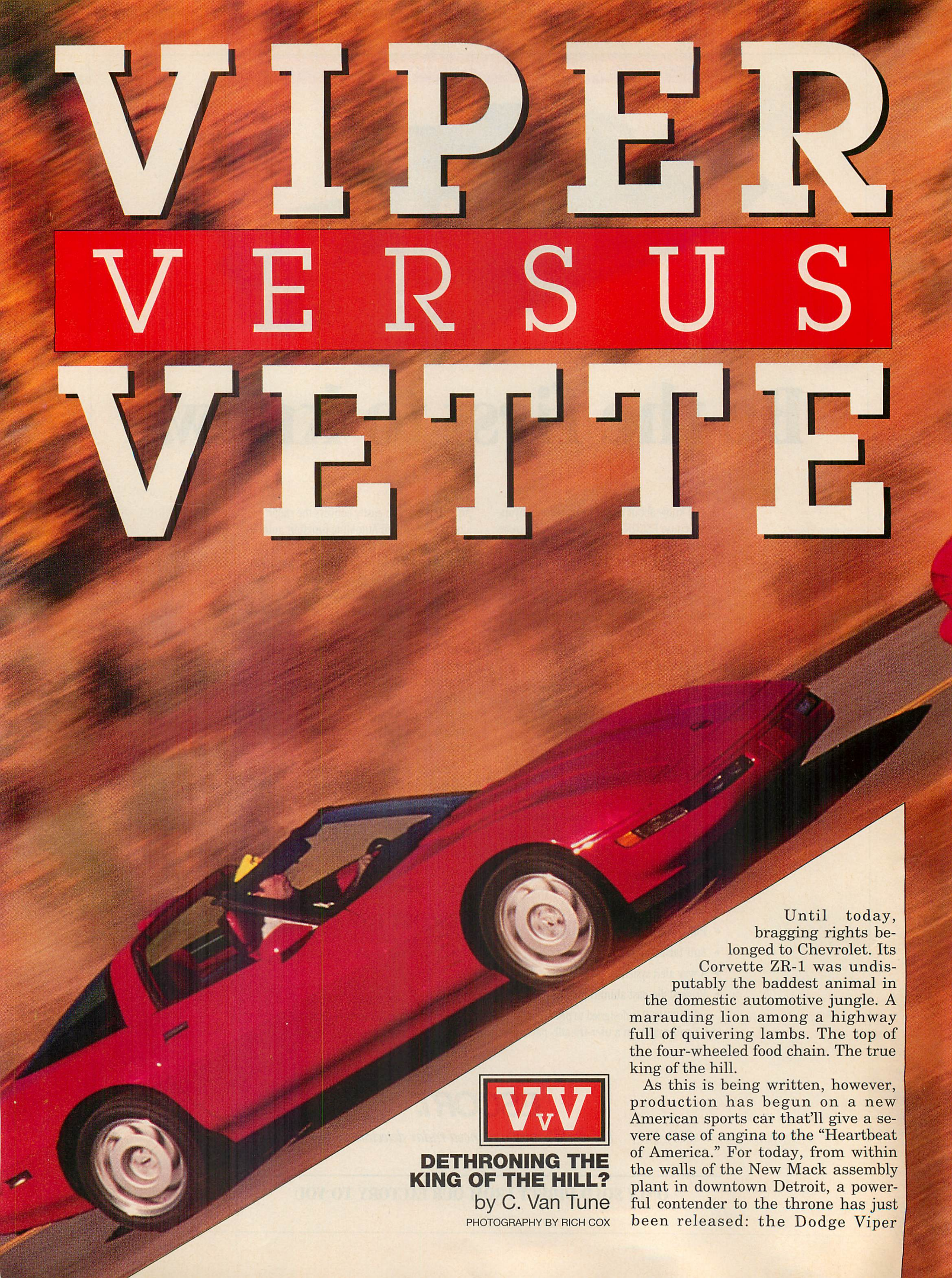


VvV

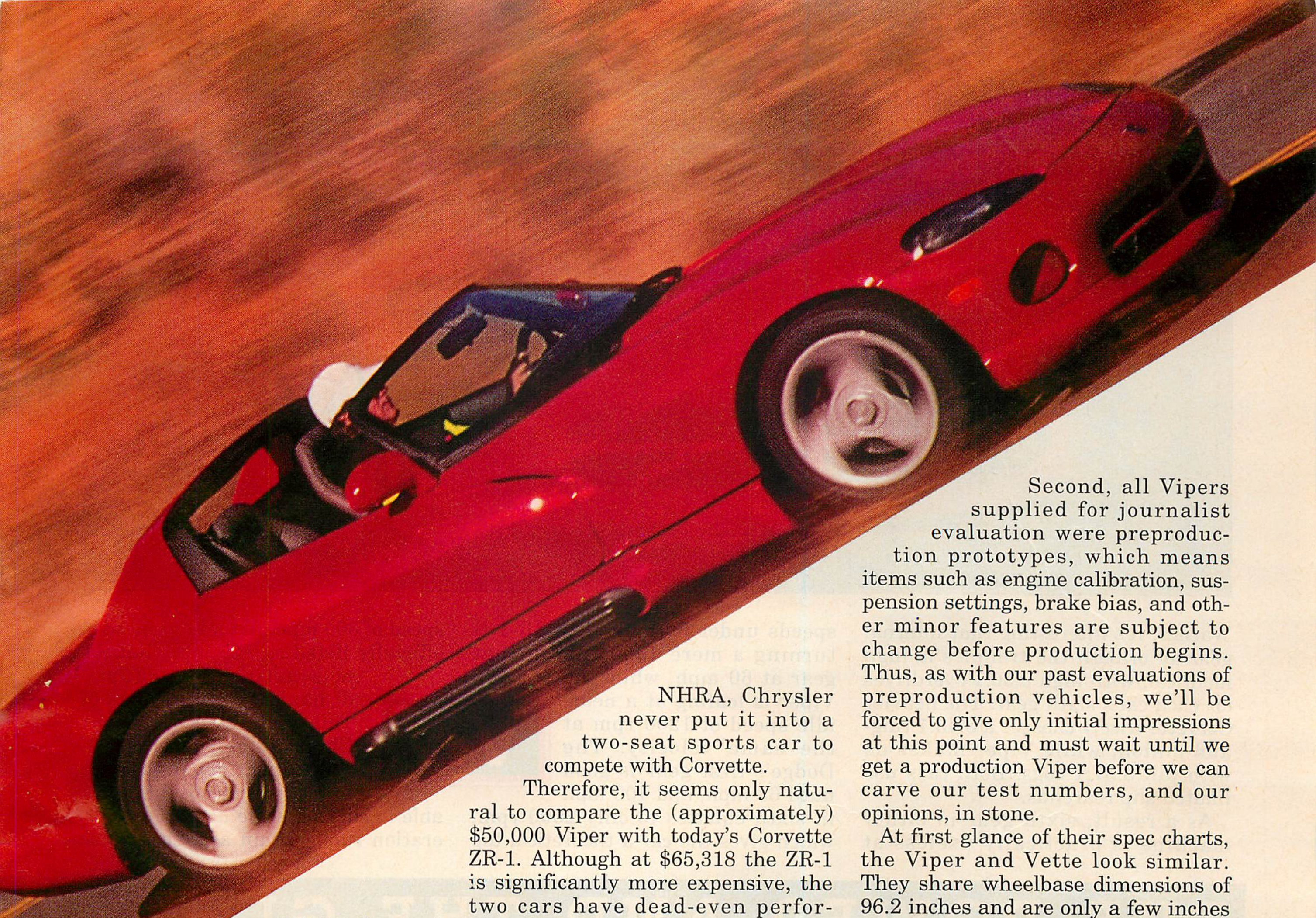
DETHRONING THE KING OF THE HILL?

by C. Van Tune

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICH COX

Until today, bragging rights belonged to Chevrolet. Its Corvette ZR-1 was undisputably the baddest animal in the domestic automotive jungle. A marauding lion among a highway full of quivering lambs. The top of the four-wheeled food chain. The true king of the hill.

As this is being written, however, production has begun on a new American sports car that'll give a severe case of angina to the "Heartbeat of America." For today, from within the walls of the New Mack assembly plant in downtown Detroit, a powerful contender to the throne has just been released: the Dodge Viper



RT/10. Created by the company famous (infamous?) for its compendium of K-car derivations, Viper takes all you know about Chrysler Corporation and snuffs it out with the first blat of its side-mounted exhaust. This is not only the quickest, best-handling car ever designed by the company, but also the most expensive. Yes, in a year when domestic car sales are among the worst in our lifetime, Chrysler has thrown sensibility to the wind and built a kick-tail tire-smoker for those of us in the lunatic inner circle.

Designed with an eye toward the past, Viper unabashedly emulates the Cobra 427 roadsters built by Carroll Shelby in the mid-'60s: Front engine, rear drive, and with as big a tire as possible stuffed into the wheelwells. Its 10-cylinder 8.0-liter (488-cubic-inch) megamotor boasts 400 horsepower at 4600 rpm and 450 pound-feet of torque at 3600 rpm. Quite simply, this is the largest engine ever used in a Dodge product, and eclipses even the powerful 426 Hemi of the muscle-car era. And while the Hemi handily won most every championship from NASCAR to NHRA, Chrysler never put it into a two-seat sports car to compete with Corvette.

Therefore, it seems only natural to compare the (approximately) $50,000 Viper with today's Corvette ZR-1. Although at $65,318 the ZR-1 is significantly more expensive, the two cars have dead-even performance goals (0-60 mph in the fours; high 12-second quarter miles) and handling objectives (close to 1.0 g of lateral grip). Our first drives in two Viper development cars (Nov. '91) gave us the incentive to proceed with this challenge. Will a head-to-head comparison dethrone the king, or is the flashy Dodge merely a show car with an inflated ego?

The opportunity to find out came recently during the press introduction of the Viper in Southern California. The activities included a 350-mile run along some of the best twisties in the state, interspersed with a couple bouts of freeway driving, plus a half day of hot laps at Willow Springs Raceway. In short, a damned good evaluation route.

Our original plan was to perform a complete road test of the Viper and ZR-1 along the driving route. Unfortunately, we were dealt a series of circumstances that limited our testing. First, '92 model ZR-1s weren't yet available, so we had to make do with a '91. There are no engine changes for the '92 ZR-1, but the effectiveness of the new Goodyear GS-C tires and Acceleration Slip Regulation (traction control) may account for some performance gain.

Second, all Vipers supplied for journalist evaluation were preproduction prototypes, which means items such as engine calibration, suspension settings, brake bias, and other minor features are subject to change before production begins. Thus, as with our past evaluations of preproduction vehicles, we'll be forced to give only initial impressions at this point and must wait until we get a production Viper before we can carve our test numbers, and our opinions, in stone.

At first glance of their spec charts, the Viper and Vette look similar. They share wheelbase dimensions of 96.2 inches and are only a few inches apart in overall length (178.6 inches, Vette; 175.1 inches, Viper). Both cars feature 17-inch wheels, massive four-wheel disc brakes, and six-speed manual transmissions. Each carries only two people, utilizes fiberglass-type body structures, and has a curb weight within 200 pounds of the other (3465, ZR-1; 3280, Viper.)

That's where the similarities end. Merely park these machines side by side, and the Corvette practically fades away. Next to the Viper's Brahma-bull-on-steroids look, the conservatively styled ZR-1 appears as docile as a Corsica rent-a-car. More than appearances, a fundamental difference between the two can be found under their forward-tilting hoods. While Viper relies on the traditional American formula of a megacube motor to make its statement, the ZR-1 takes a more sophisticated approach (see sidebar). With its output of 375 horsepower, the ZR-1 boasts a weight-to-power ratio of 9.2 pounds/horsepower. The Viper's 400 horsepower equates to a ratio of 8.2 pounds/horsepower. Both cars utilize six-speed gearboxes (with first-to-fourth gear lockouts during light acceleration); the Corvette's is by ZF and Viper's is new from Borg-

Warner. It's interesting that internal gearing of both the trannies is nigh identical, with high 0.50:1 overdrives for each car's sixth gear. The heavier Corvette wisely chooses a 3.45:1 ring-and-pinion, while Viper makes do with tall 3.07:1 cogs. Both cars use limited-slip rearends.

As a result, sixth gear in either machine is practically useless at speeds under 80 mph. The ZR-1 is turning a mere 1500 rpm in that gear at 60 mph, while the Viper is loafing at a near-idle speed of 1200 rpm at the same velocity. The Dodge's first gear is good until 63 mph, and 100 mph in sixth equates to only 2000 rpm, which gives the car a theoretical top speed of 300 mph. Actual top speed is officially listed as 165 mph, but it's no secret Emerson Fittipaldi has seen the far side of 180 mph in a Viper at Chrysler's proving grounds.

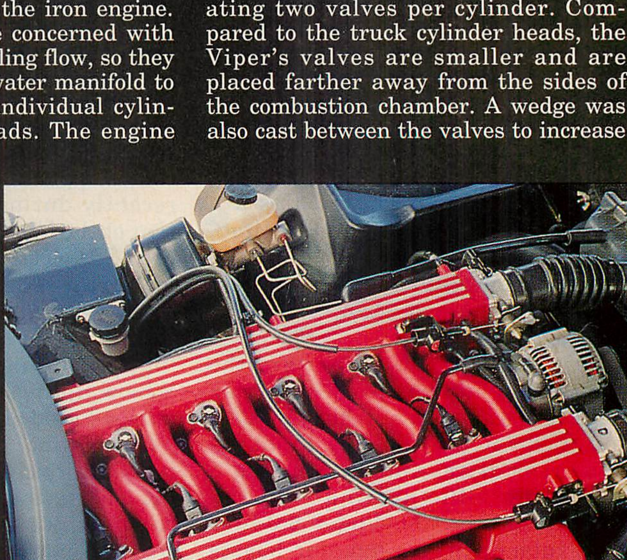
We didn't get the chance to test top speeds, but were able to click off some unofficial acceleration runs. On an asphalt surface

THE POWER AND THE GLORY

This is an impossible assignment. How can you compare the engines in a Vette and Viper? Can you compare an F-15 Eagle with a P-51 Mustang, Madonna with Julie Andrews? Of course not. The Viper and ZR-1 engines produce roughly the same power, but the only other similarity is that they both burn gasoline. These two engines have personalities as diverse as Michael Jackson and Arnold Schwarzenegger (you guess which is which).

A comparison of specific outputs favors the Corvette LT-5 with 66 horsepower/liter against 50 horsepower/liter for the Viper. The LT-5 makes its power using the best of modern engine technology; the Viper uses brute displacement. No tricks like the Corvette's computer-controlled dual intake tracts—that's the domain of little (if you can call 5.7 liters little) high-revving engines. The 8.0-liter Viper is the new kid on the block and is based on a not-yet-in-production Dodge truck engine. Carroll Shelby and crew were quick to recognize the hype value of having the only production V-10 in town, and assigned corporate brother Lamborghini the job of turning this truck motor into a thoroughbred sports-car powerplant.

In truck form, the V-10 is all cast iron, but Lamborghini engineers re-cast the heads and block in aluminum, cutting 100 pounds from the iron engine. Lambo engineers were concerned with providing adequate cooling flow, so they designed an external water manifold to distribute coolant to individual cylinders and cylinder heads. The engine uses a single cam in the block, with hydraulic lifters and short pushrods operating two valves per cylinder. Compared to the truck cylinder heads, the Viper's valves are smaller and are placed farther away from the sides of the combustion chamber. A wedge was also cast between the valves to increase



No gratuitous high-technology here, just plenty of good old cubic inches and enough neck-snapping potential to bring a tear to the eye of any true muscle-car fanatic. The Viper's violent 8.0-liter OHV V-10 makes 400 horsepower at 4600 rpm and develops an awesome 450 pound-feet of torque at 3600 rpm.

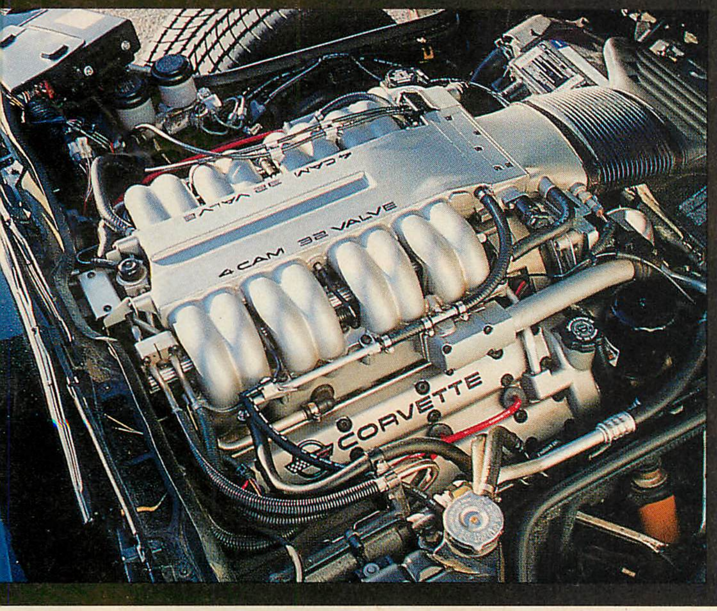
with less than optimum traction, the Viper thundered to 60 mph in 4.8 seconds, went 0-100 mph in 12.0 seconds, and covered the quarter mile in 13.1 seconds with a terminal speed just under 110 mph. Fast, yes, but not the Cobra-beating figures we'd expected. In fact, the ZR-1 was closer to Viper than we'd imagined, with its times of 4.9, 11.8, and 13.4 seconds at 106.9 mph, respectively.

As important as Viper's all-out performance is its muscular torque curve. Whereas the ZR-1 needs to be in the correct gear for *acceleratus rapidimus*, the Viper driver needn't keep a close eye on which gear he's in. The big Dodge will leave the line in third or fourth gear without protest and deliver seamless power right on up to the 6000-rpm limit. The motor sounds healthy when you're leaning hard on the gas, but at idle or under light throttle, it's nearly hush quiet. By contrast, the Corvette's LT-5 engine delivers a high-rpm serenade better

turbulence. This design allows a 9.1:1 compression ratio without using knock sensors, uses premium unleaded, and meets emissions without needing EGR. The crankshaft was forged (cast in the truck), and forged truck connecting rods are used unchanged.

The Dodge V-10 uses a bottom-feed arrangement that places fuel injectors on the bottom of the intake plenum, controlled by a sequential EFI system, which is the first application of this technology at ChryCo. Bottom-mounted injectors lower the engine profile, and the fuel flow helps cool the injectors.

Stereolithography was used to computer-model the headers (particularly difficult to fit around the Viper's tube frame), saving the project an estimated six weeks over more conventional methods. The bottom-feed injectors and external water system resulted in the lowest profile of any 90-degree V-engine ever built at Chrysler, 25.9 inches from the bottom of the oil pan to the highest bracket on the motor.



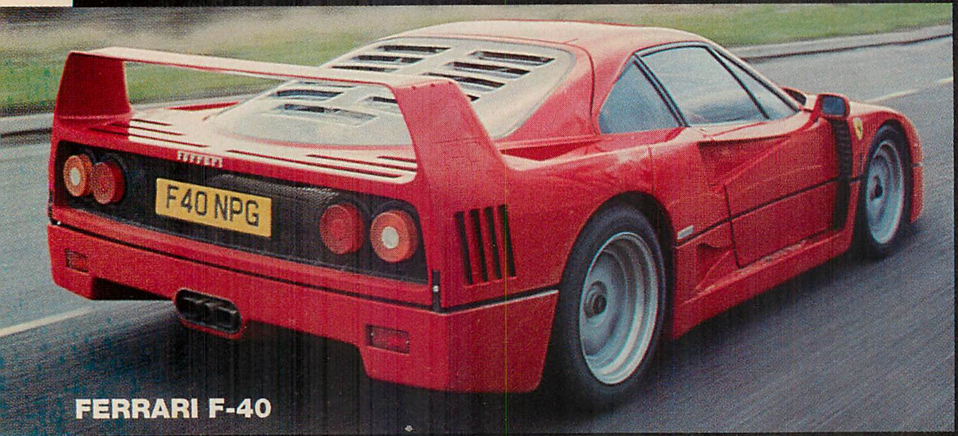
With its double overhead camshafts, four valves per cylinder, and dual-tract intake manifold, the all-alloy LT-5 V-8 is the antithesis of the Viper's monster V-10. Although it gives away considerable displacement, the 5.7-liter techno tour de force still makes a healthy 375 horsepower at 5800 rpm and 370 pound-feet of torque at 4800 rpm.

The LT-5 Corvette motor uses almost every high-tech trick in the book to make 375 horsepower at 5800 rpm. It's at the cutting edge of engine technology, although it doesn't use any exotic metals or composites. Four cams are used, and four valves per cylinder. Two intake runners feed each cylinder, one per intake valve. Each intake valve has different valve timing, one biased toward high engine speed performance, the other low and medium speed. The engine control computer keeps the high-speed intake tract closed until high output is demanded by the driver, at which time it opens both tracts for true four-valve operation.

Mechanically, these two engines are dramatically different. From a power output standpoint, the Viper makes 25 more horsepower 1200 rpm earlier in the rev band than the Vette. The Viper's biggest real-world advantage is torque. This monster grunts out 450 pound-feet of torque at 3600 rpm (80 more than the Vette). The ZR-1 engine is the Joe Montana of sports cars—it's quick, intelligent, and knows all the tricks. The Viper's big V-10 is a massive defensive lineman—overpowering, always there, and above all, strong.

—Ron Grable

THE FOUR-SECOND CLUB



FERRARI F-40

GMC SYCLONE

PORSCHE CARRERA 4

Membership in the Four-Second Club is prized beyond reason and exclusive beyond belief. There are probably fewer than 10 production cars that are members. Qualifying is simple: Accelerate from rest to a calibrated 60 mph in less than 5.0 seconds. We know, you're thinking that's no big deal, Top Fuel dragsters go 300 mph in that same time.

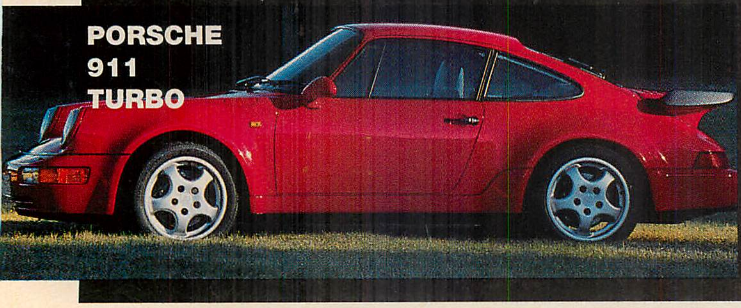
Yes, they do, with somewhere around 5000 horsepower and tires made of Super Glue. For this discussion, we're talking production cars—cars manufactured in relatively large quantities—which must satisfy EPA, DOT, CAFE, and your insurance company, and, significantly, with street tires. To see how difficult it is to get a production car to 60 mph in under 5.0 seconds, let's look at some numbers.

To accelerate a 3000-pound rear-drive car to 60 mph in 5.0 seconds requires a force of 1650 pounds be exerted on the car for the full 5 seconds. This force must come from the tires. If the car has a 50/50 weight distribution, each rear tire is supporting 750 pounds of static weight. When the car accelerates, weight transfers to the rear (for this example, 100 pounds per wheel would transfer), bringing the total vertical load on each rear wheel up to 850 pounds. Assuming a friction coefficient between tire and surface of 0.9 allows each tire to generate 765 pounds of thrust. The total from both tires of 1530 pounds is short of the needed 1650. If the engine can supply more, it'll end up as wheelspin.

These numbers are approximate, but illustrate the point. Regardless of how much torque the engine can send back to the rear axle, the vehicle described will not be able to make it to 60 in 5 seconds. It weighs too much and doesn't have enough tire. So, rules No. 1 and 2 for membership in the FSC are low weight and big, sticky tires.

Notice in the above discussion how the thrust to accelerate the vehicle is highly dependent on the weight on the rear axle and the amount of dynamic weight transfer during acceleration. This favors cars with a rear weight bias and short wheelbase (better weight transfer), like the Porsche 911 Turbo at 4.9 seconds. Rule No. 3: As important as how much total weight is that as much weight as possible is over the drive wheels.

However, it's not necessary to have the engine behind the rear axle like Porsche to get this extreme rear weight



PORSCHE 911 TURBO

LOTUS X-180R

bias. Mid-engine cars can have rear weight bias, like club members Lotus Esprit X-180R at 4.7 seconds and Ferrari F-40, on record with various sources at 3.9 (questionable production status, but a good example of a lightweight vehicle).

At this point, you may be wondering why we haven't mentioned front-drive vehicles. It's because they're terribly handicapped in hard acceleration by weight transferring off the drive wheels. It's a classic Catch-22; the more thrust they generate, the more weight they transfer off the drive wheels. We don't know of a single front-drive production car that's a club member, and we've tested all of them. Rule No. 4 is simple: no front-wheel drive.

A special category is four- or all-wheel drive. For 0-60 performance, the more tires developing thrust the better, and the GMC Syclone is a good example, a pickup truck that gets to 60 in 4.9 seconds. The Porsche 959 (another questionable production car, and one no longer being built, at that), at 3.9 seconds, is probably the world's fastest four-wheel-drive car. Its real-world descendant, the Carrera 4, has been clocked at 4.8 seconds, so it's another member of this elite and fleet group.

Front-engine vehicles usually have front weight bias, but in some high-performance cases, weight distribution can be 50/50 or even rear biased. Case in point is the most recent Corvette ZR-1 we tested, a FSC member at 4.9 seconds. The newest FSC member and subject of the attached comparo is Chrysler Corporation's Dodge Viper.

Its 4.8-second 0-60 time establishes it as a member in good standing. The Viper's weight distribution is exactly 50/50, but the most significant contributor to its 0-60 performance are the unbelievable 335/35ZR17 Michelin tires on the rear—the ultimate high-performance street tire on what's perhaps the ultimate American factory hot-rod.

For 0-60 performance, traction has proven more elusive than power. High horsepower is something easily developed in the comfort of a dyno room. But the intricate interaction of powertrain, chassis, and tire is something far more mysterious and far less repeatable. And the design requirements for coming hard off the starting blocks work at odds with those of cornering capability and stability. As with all things automotive, it's a complex network of compromises, and only in a handful of cases do the engineers of the world have the opportunity, and resources, to gain admission to the four-second club.

—R.G.

than anything found on a CD.

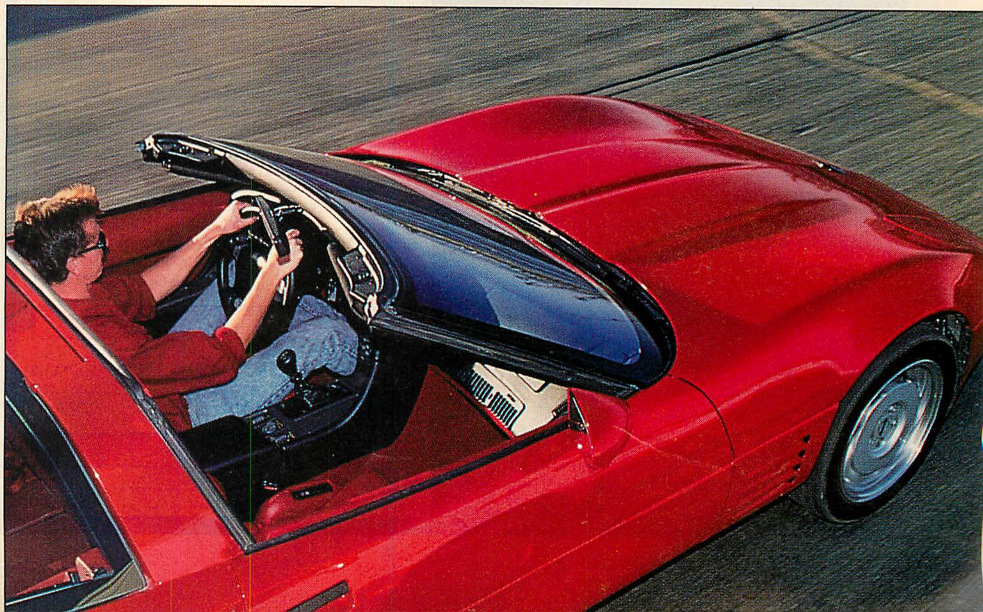
Because of strict government noise standards, Chrysler had to jump through hoops to get the side exhausts certified. The result is a set of stainless steel tubular headers that feed into close-coupled 12-inch catalytic converters and 21-inch mufflers. The entire piping has been outfitted with Nomex wrapping to reflect heat away from the body panels, but it still gets toasty along the door sills after you've been driving. A placard on each sill warns where not to touch.

VvV

In Europe of the '50s and '60s, a popular test of fast cars was 0-100-0 mph, and the Cobra 427 reputedly accomplished this synapse-abusing feat in a blistering 13.8 seconds. Like the Cobra, both Viper and Vette utilize excellent four-wheel disc braking systems, but Viper goes for brawn, not brains, with Brembo four-piston front calipers and 13-inch rotors all-around. Anti-lock is not used. The high-tech ZR-1 chooses Bosch ABS IIS anti-lock (augmenting 13-inch front rotors and 12-inch rears) and relies on its computerized sophistication to make up for the difference in swept area.

Even with its lack of ABS, the Viper easily bested the ZR-1 in this feat with a time of 15.8 seconds. The Corvette trailed with a 17.0-second run, but the numbers of both cars were significantly hampered by the road surface we used. On a proper test track, we're confident the Viper would come close to Chrysler's target of 14.5 seconds. We're not convinced a car this powerful should have to live without ABS, though, and understand it's being developed for future use.

When the Cobra was built, Shelby didn't have the luxury of equipping it with 17-inch wheels and tires (see sidebar). The Corvette uses 9.5-inch wide alloys and 275/40ZR17s in the front and 11.0-inchers with 315/35ZR17s at the rear. Viper fits the same size rubber on 0.5-inch wider front wheels, but takes traction to the extreme with 335/35ZR17



A LOOK AT THE LEGEND

Everyone from Chrysler President Bob Lutz to "Team Viper" consultant Carroll Shelby will tell you Viper was designed to be a modern-day "remembrance" of the brutal Cobra 427—an aluminum-bodied race car that just barely qualified as street legal. The limited run (348) of these monsters built between 1965-67 were truly not for the timid.

Shelby's goal was a simple one: create the meanest, nastiest, and plain old fastest production car on the planet. Few would dare question his ultimate success.

The first Cobra debuted in 1962 as an Anglo-American hybrid that combined a lightweight body and chassis from AC Cars of England with a powerful 260-cubic-inch V-8 from Ford. Carroll Shelby was the master chef of this international performance recipe, and served up a Ferrari-taunting dish that took the automotive press by the neck and shook them fiercely. The Cobra was suddenly on the cover of every major car magazine, and surprised even Shelby with its response. This was near the beginning of the American muscle-car era, and the 2100-pound Cobra was a radical notion among the 409-cubic-inch Chevy Biscaynes and big-by-comparison Corvettes that served as hi-po cars of the day.

Shelby didn't waste any time waiting to race his creation. In October 1962, Bill Krause drove the Cobra in its first event at the Times Grand Prix at Riverside Raceway. A broken rear hub sidelined the Cobra, but not before it ran rings around the Corvettes Shelby so hoped to beat. The 260 V-8 soon made way for the Ford 289, and performance jumped to supercar levels. The 0-60-mph run took a mere 5.6 seconds, and the quarter mile blurred your vision in the low 14s. (Remember, this was done on tires about as wide as those on your power mower.)

Shelby fought the Cobra's competition teething problems and continued to race, race, race. After defeats at Daytona, Sebring, and other venues, the men of Shelby-American hit on a formula that worked. Drivers with names like Bondurant, Gurney, Hill, and Miles took Cobras to victory across the country. In 1964, a special Cobra chassis was given an aerodynamic coupe body and sent forth to challenge Ferrari on its home turf. At LeMans, this Cobra "Daytona" scored a fourth overall finish and a first in GT class. In 1965, Shelby's cars won the coveted FIA GT class championship. The Cobras seemed unstoppable.

Street versions of the original Cobra roadster were stretched and formed to accept a strengthened chassis that was to contain the now-legendary 427-cubic-inch V-8. With a conservatively rated 425 horsepower (and 480 pound-feet) under its aluminum hood, the 2529-pound Cobra 427 was untouchable in straight-line performance. But with its 90.0-inch wheelbase and 48/52-percent front-rear weight distribution, this Cobra was a four-wheeled frag bomb in the hands of anyone but the most talented drivers. The car pictured here, owned by Ron McClure, yanked our fifth wheel to 60 mph in 4.2 seconds and through the quarter mile in 12.8 seconds at 111.3 mph. But give the Viper a set of 4.11:1 rear gears, and it'd be just as quick. Who says they don't build 'em like they used to? *—CVT*

TECH DATA

'66 Cobra 427

GENERAL/POWERTRAIN

Body style	2-door, 2-passenger
Vehicle configuration	Front engine, rear drive
Engine configuration	V-8, OHV, 2 valves/cylinder
Engine displacement, ci/cc	427/6998
Horsepower, hp @ rpm, SAE net	425 @ 6000
Torque, lb-ft @ rpm, SAE net	480 @ 3700
Transmission	4-speed man.
Axle ratio	3.54:1

DIMENSIONS

Wheelbase, in./mm	90.0/2286
Length, in./mm	156.0/3962
Curb weight, lb	2529
Fuel capacity, gal	18.0

CHASSIS

Suspension, f/r	Independent/independent
Steering	Rack and pinion
Brakes, f/r	Vented discs/vented discs
Wheels	15 x 7.5, cast magnesium
Tires	8.15 x 15 Goodyear Blue Dot

PERFORMANCE

Acceleration, 0-60, sec	4.2
Quarter mile, sec/mph	12.8/111.3
Braking, 60-0, ft	130
Skidpad, 200-ft, lateral g	0.92 (est.)

PRICE

Base price	$7495
Typical restored price (1992)	$500,000

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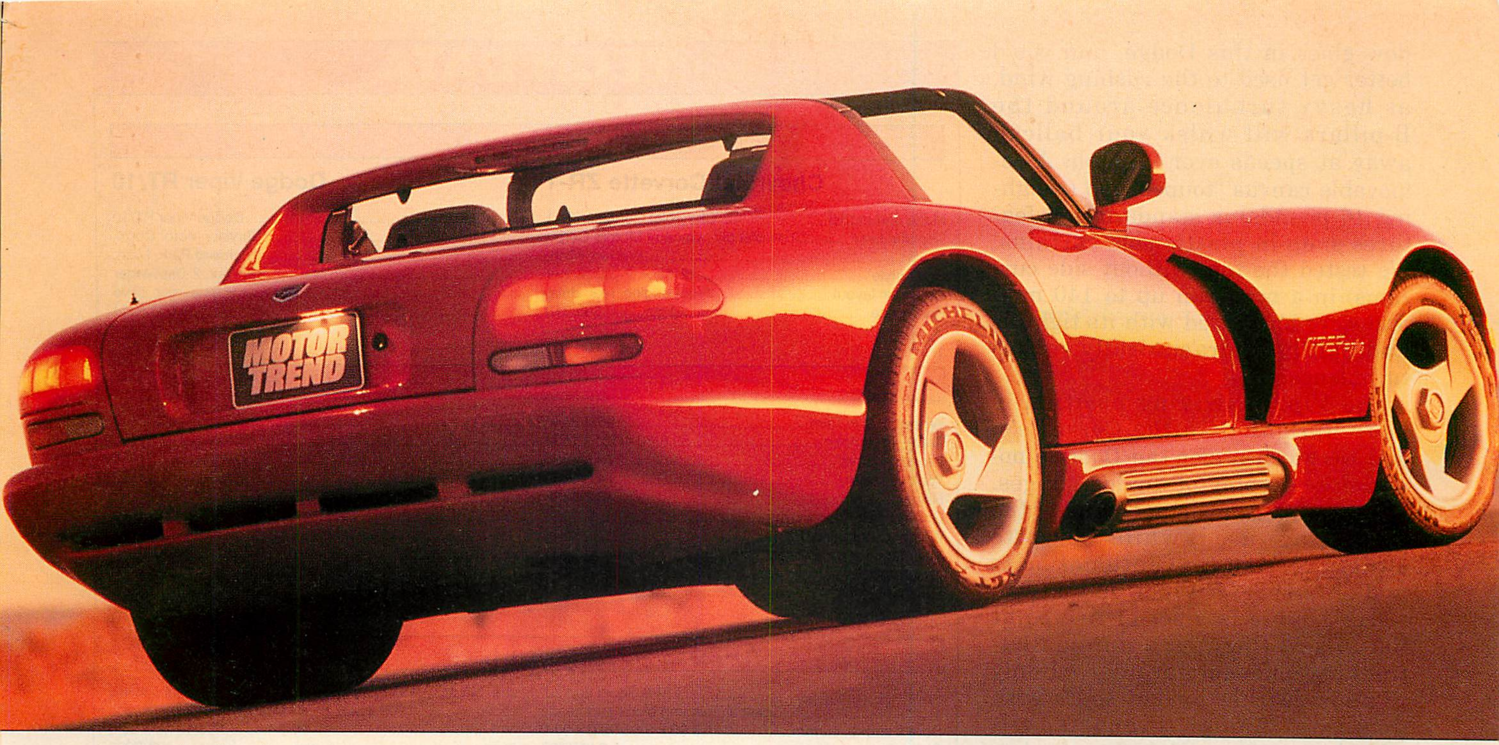
radials on 13-inch-wide rear alloys.

Suspension development has also made big leaps since 1965. Like Cobra, Viper uses a tubular steel frame, but includes a center spine structure with tubular outriggers to support the resin transfer molding composite body panels. High torsional stiffness was a major design criteria, and the result is a car that shows remarkably little flex when driven over railroad tracks or potholes. The suspension is fully independent, with unequal-length upper and lower control arms backed by coil-over Koni gas-charged shocks. Tubular anti-roll bars (27-millimeter diameter front, 22 millimeter rear) and a power-assisted rack-and-pinion box (16.7:1 ratio) contribute to the car's fast, flat handling. The 630-pound V-10 is mounted 6.5 inches behind the centerline of the front axle to allow a perfect 50/50 front/rear weight distribution.

The Corvette uses its tried-and-true combination of upper and lower control arms plus a transversely mounted fiberglass spring at the front. Upper and lower control arms, trailing links, and a similar fiberglass spring at the rear provide quick response to driver inputs and delights with an ultra-flat cornering attitude. Cockpit-adjustable Delco-Bilstein gas-charged shocks and anti-roll bars serve duty on both ends of the suspension. Power rack-and-pinion steering with a 15.7:1 ratio is also employed. Weight distribution is a slightly front-heavy 52/48 percent.

Comparing the cars on the street, through curving mountain roads, and across flat-out rural landscapes rewarded both our drivers with permanent grins. But back-to-back stints behind each car's leather-wrapped steering wheel brought out some big differences.

The Corvette is a perennial favorite of ours, with a winning combination of ready power and excellent

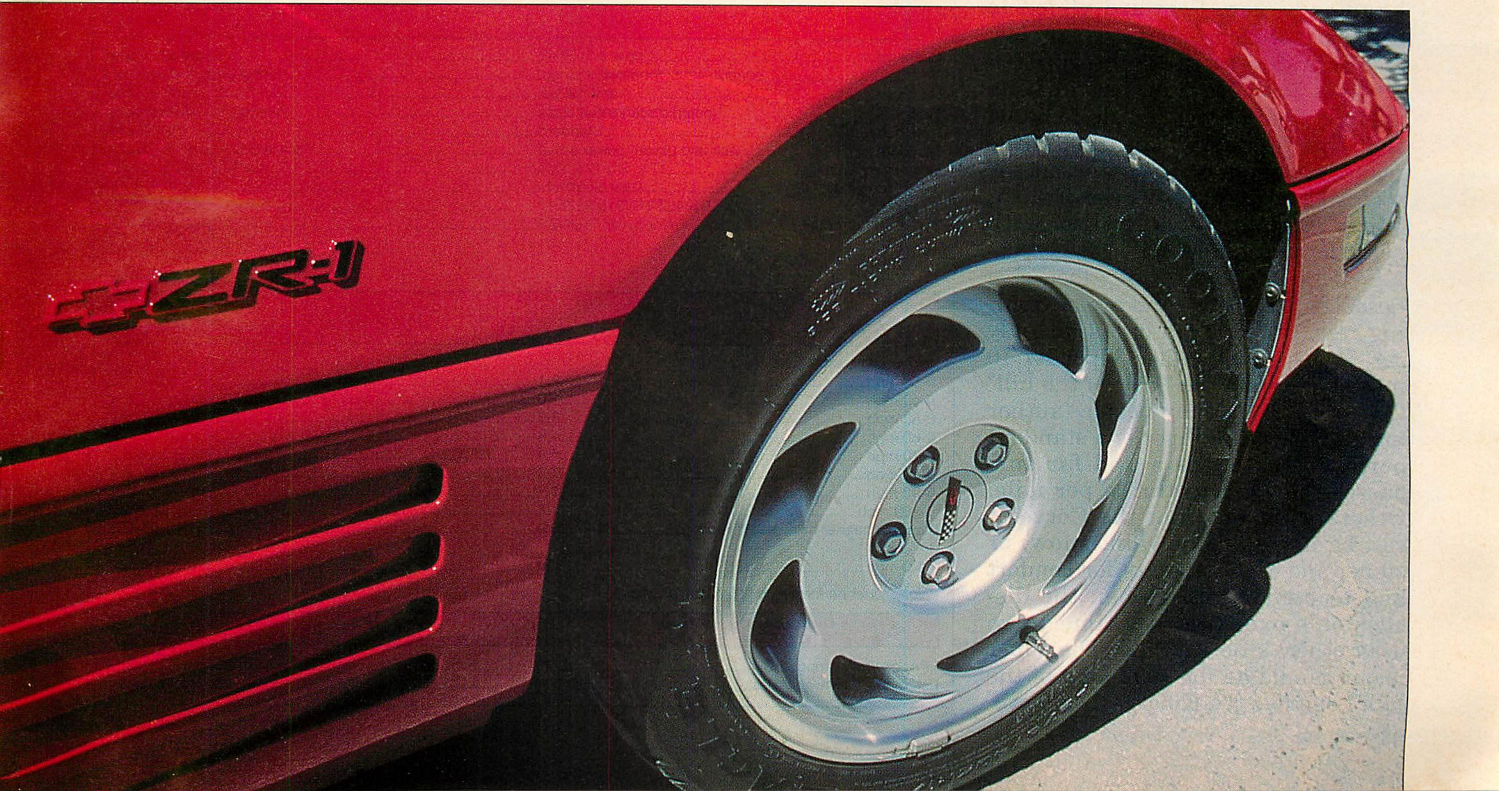


driver feedback. This is a machine you can hang out in a turn with confidence, and it can be steered with the throttle in all but the really tight, slow, corners that evoke understeer. The FX-3 adjustable suspension allows tuning for sport or comfort, and the big tires provide ample warning before breaking loose. On the down side, the ultimate Corvette suffers from a transmission that sounds like a cement mixer and an engine that tends to run quite hot when exercised hard.

Jump into the Vette after a half-hour blast (and we mean blast!) in the Viper, and the ZR-1 feels like a pussycat by comparison. Neither car can be characterized as difficult to drive, but the Viper will bite an untalented driver if its throttle is lifted abruptly in a fast corner. Steering effort is heavy, but with good feel on-center. Response is fast and linear without being darty. There's effectively no body roll, and the superior frame rigidity makes it feel as solid as a bank vault.

On slow corners, an initial bit of understeer warns you're entering too fast, but kick it gently with the throttle, and the tail will walk around to correct the line. Driven with finesse, we're convinced the Viper can see 1.0 g on a skidpad, which would best the top ZR-1 rating of 0.95 g by a significant margin. Not a high-strung exotic, the Viper can be chugged along in 10-mph traffic without complaint, and average drivers can have fun in the car as long as they have respect for the throttle and the fury it controls.

The Vette's cockpit is Ritz Carlton plush compared to the Viper's no-power-anything attitude. There are no exterior door handles or side win-



dow glass in this Dodge, and you'd better get used to the rushing wind, as heavy turbulence around the B-pillars will whisk your ballcap away at speeds over 90 mph. A removable canvas "toupee" top (weighing 16 pounds) is standard and features snap-in plastic side curtains. We tested the top (without side curtains) in a brief run up to 140 mph and were impressed with its tight fit and ability to dramatically reduce turbulence.

The Viper's driving position is more upright than the Corvette's, and we much prefer the Dodge's nonsense display of analog gauges. Three-point door-mounted belts (no airbag) are used, while Corvette owners receive conventional belts and an airbag; a Viper option well worth buying is a set of five-point harnesses. Chrysler's minimalist-thinking engineers acquiesced only to allow leather bucket seats with pump-up lumbar supports, tilt wheel, and powerful six-speaker sound system as concessions to anything but road-race use. On the other end on the sybaritic spectrum, the ZR-1 pampers with power assist on everything but the glovebox door. To appease the landed gentry, air conditioning will be available on the Viper, but only as a dealer-installed option.

There's ample leg room in the Viper for people over six feet tall, but the pedals are offset far to the left and force the driver's clutch leg uncomfortably against the bottom of the dash. Ergonomically, the Viper's shifter is easier to manipulate, but the Corvette's parking brake is handier to use. Forward vision is better in the Dodge, but its rear view is worse due to the bulging back fenders that occlude much of the mirror's field of vision. Additionally, the Viper's "targa bar" and short rear glass render the center mirror practically useless. Like Cobra, Viper includes a real trunk with space for two golfbags.

So both cars are brutally fast, give nosebleed handling, and are as exciting (almost) to strap on as an Indy car. But does the Dodge Viper RT/10 indeed dethrone the "king of the hill" Corvette ZR-1? Many people (author included) feel the Viper is a standout performance bargain and far surpasses the ZR-1 in thrills per mile. Others point out that the Corvette can be driven come rain, snow, or shine, and give it points for comfort and technology. But when the discussion's over and it's time to go drive, there's no waffling: The Viper is our candidate for 1992 king of the hill. Long live the King.

TECH DATA

GENERAL

	Chevrolet Corvette ZR-1	Dodge Viper RT/10
Make and model	Chevrolet Corvette ZR-1	Dodge Viper RT/10
Manufacturer	Chevrolet div., General Motors Corp., Warren, Mich.	Chrysler Motor Corp., Highland Park, Mich.
Body style	2-door, 2-passenger	2-door, 2-passenger
Drivetrain layout	Front engine, rear drive	Front engine, rear drive
Base price	$65,318	$50,000 (est.)

DIMENSIONS

	Chevrolet Corvette ZR-1	Dodge Viper RT/10
Wheelbase, in./mm	96.2/2444	96.2/2444
Track, f/r, in./mm	59.6/60.4/1513/1534	59.6/60.6/1514/1539
Length, in./mm	178.6/4536	175.1/4448
Width, in./mm	74.0/1880	75.7/1923
Height, in./mm	46.7/1186	Not available
Ground clearance, in./mm	4.7/120	Not available
Weight distribution, f/r, %	52/48	50/50
Manufacturer's curb weight, lb	3465	3280
Weight/power ratio, lb/hp	9.2	8.2
Fuel capacity, gal	20.0	22.0

ENGINE

	Chevrolet Corvette ZR-1	Dodge Viper RT/10
Type	V-8, liquid cooled, cast aluminumn block and heads	V-10, liquid cooled, cast aluminum block and heads
Bore x stroke, in./mm	3.90 x 3.66/99.0 x 93.0	4.00 x 3.88/101.6 x 98.6
Displacement, ci/cc	349/5727	488/7990
Compression ratio	11.25:1	9.1:1
Valve gear	DOHC, 4 valves/cylinder	OHV, 2 valves/cylinder
Horsepower, hp @ rpm, SAE net	375 @ 5800	400 @ 4600
Torque, lb-ft @ rpm, SAE net	370 @ 4800	450 @ 3600
Horsepower/liter	66	50.1
Redline, rpm	7000	6000
Recommended fuel	Unleaded premium	Unleaded premium

DRIVELINE

	Chevrolet Corvette ZR-1	Dodge Viper RT/10
Transmission type	6-speed man.	6-speed man.
Gear ratios		
(1st)	2.68:1	2.66:1
(2nd)	1.80:1	1.78:1
(3rd)	1.29:1	1.30:1
(4th)	1.00:1	1.00:1
(5th)	0.75:1	0.74:1
(6th)	0.50:1	0.50:1
Axle ratio	3.45:1	3.07:1
Final-drive ratio	1.73:1	1.54:1
Engine rpm, 60 mph in top gear	1500	1200

CHASSIS

	Chevrolet Corvette ZR-1	Dodge Viper RT/10
Suspension	Upper and lower control arms, monoleaf springs, anti-roll bar	Upper and lower control arms, coil springs, anti-roll bar
Brakes, f/r	Vented discs/vented discs	Vented discs/vented discs
Anti-lock	Standard	Not offered
Steering	Rack and pinion, power assist	Rack and pinion, power assist
Wheel size, f/r, in.	17 x 9.5/17 x 11.0	17 x 10.0/17 x 13.0
Wheel type/material	Cast aluminum	Cast aluminum
Tire size, f/r	275/40ZR17/315/35ZR17	275/40ZR17/335/35ZR17
Tire mfr. and model	Goodyear Eagle ZR	Michelin *XGT Z*

PERFORMANCE AND TEST DATA

	Chevrolet Corvette ZR-1	Dodge Viper RT/10
Acceleration, sec		
0-30 mph	2.1	2.0*
0-40 mph	3.0	2.8*
0-50 mph	3.9	3.9*
0-60 mph	4.9	4.8*
0-70 mph	6.4	6.1*
0-80 mph	7.6	8.4*
0-90 mph	9.7	10.2*
0-100 mph	11.8	12.0*
Standing quarter mile, sec @ mph	13.4/106.9	13.1/109.3*
Braking, ft		
60-0 mph	120	138*

**Note: Viper performance figures are unofficial.*

FUEL ECONOMY

	Chevrolet Corvette ZR-1	Dodge Viper RT/10
EPA, city/hwy., mpg	16/25	Not available
Est. range, city/hwy., miles	320/500	Not available

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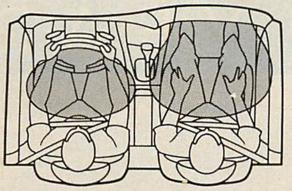

THE MAZDA 929

*The only car in its class with dual air bags standard. ABS. 3.0L, 24-valve V6 engine. Multi-link suspension. *Available leather-trimmed upholstery. First car with available solar-powered ventilation system. 36-month/50,000-mile limited warranty. No-deductible, "bumper-to-bumper" protection. See your dealer for details. For a free brochure on the new 929 or any new Mazda, call 1-800-639-1000.*

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*Seats upholstered in leather except for back side of front seats, bottom cushion side panels and other minor areas.

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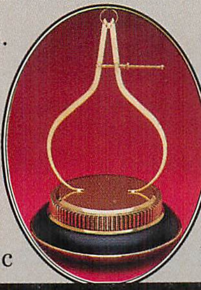
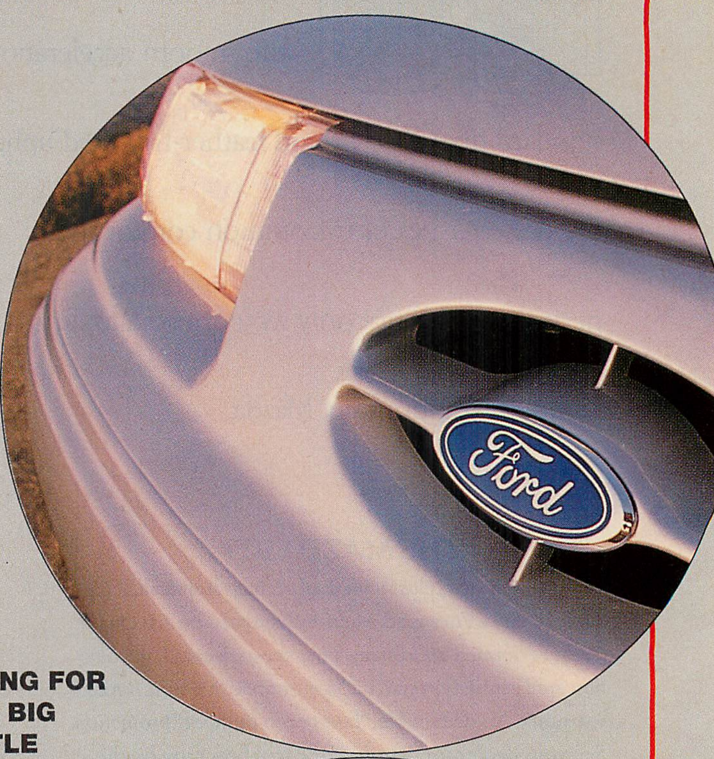
MOTOR TREND'S
1992 CAR OF THE YEAR



It's Car of the Year time again, boys and girls. Get comfy, and we'll tell you all about it.

This is another in a recent string of banner product years for Detroit. The number of new domestic vehicles presented in time to qualify for Car of the Year nomination totaled 11, almost as many as the traditionally high import introductions. That's a terrific sign, because only a few competitions ago, we had a domestic field composed of only four cars from two manufacturers.

We nominated a wide variety of new rollers this year. As before, we invite a car company's qualifying new-car line to submit to testing. The car maker's lieutenants huddle together and brainstorm which spe-



SHOOTING FOR THE BIG TITLE

by the Editors of *Motor Trend*

Eighty Eight
Royale LS

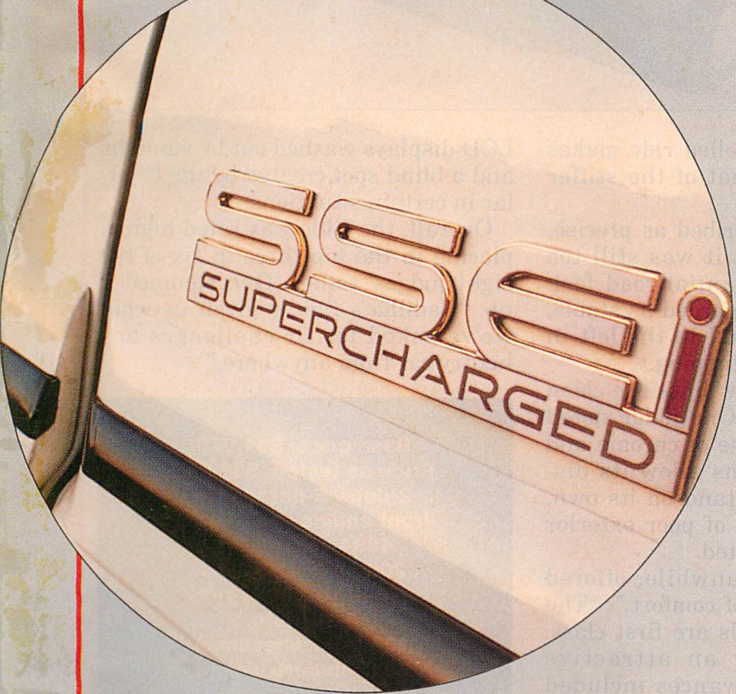
Oldsmobile

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
SCOTT KILLEEN AND
CHARLIE RATHBUN

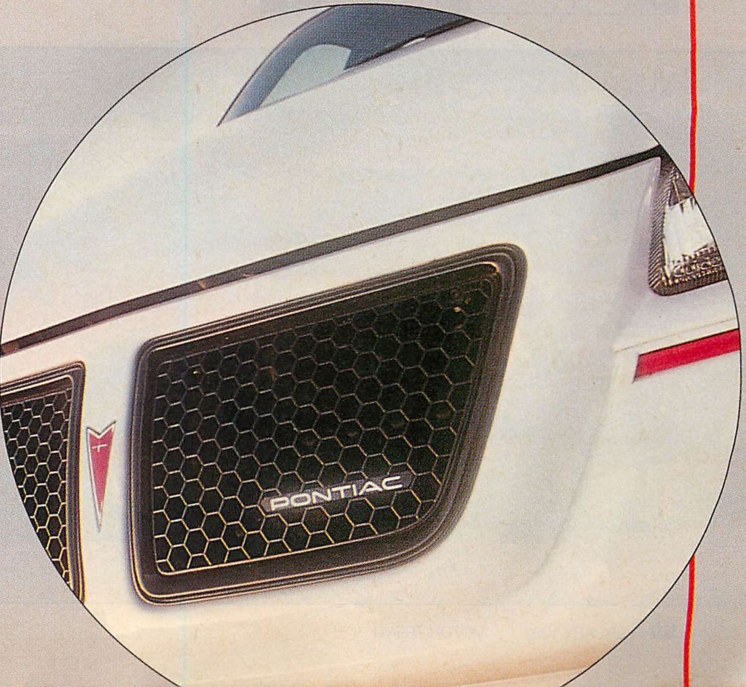
cific model represents its best shot at the Big Title. The vehicle the company supplies becomes its candidate, and if it should win, only that model is the *Motor Trend* Car of the Year, not the entire line. This isn't the army, though, and no nominee is required to show up in formation on test day.

Buick was tagged for its LeSabre, Roadmaster, and Skylark, but the GM near-luxury division chose to decline all three nominations. Cadillac was asked to show up with the Eldorado and the Seville (resulting in Eldo Touring Coupe and STS candidates); the Ford folks were invited for the Taurus (and they brought the SHO); Mercury anted up the all-new Sable (LS); Oldsmobile was nominated for its sporty Achieva coupe and Eighty Eight sedan (the limited-edition, high-performance Achieva SCX and the high-zoot Eighty Eight Royale LS were supplied); and finally, Pontiac was nominated for the new Bonneville and Grand Am (bringing out the powerhouse Bonneville SSEi and Grand Am GT). Ford's Crown Victoria and the Mercury Grand Marquis are classified as imports by content, and therefore were nominated as such.

You bet it was a fun week. We sat though tech briefings until we were seeing computer graphics in our dreams, and we almost literally tested the tires off several candidates. Whether they finished first, middle, or elsewhere, each of these cars stood up to the bar and acquitted itself well. The envelope, please.



CADILLAC MOTOR CAR DIVISION
ELDORAD
MOTOR
TREND



CADILLAC ELDORADO TOURING COUPE

Cadillac is definitely doing something right. Both the Eldorado and its sister Cadillac, the Seville, represent dramatic steps forward for GM's luxury division. "This is a well-turned blend of traditional American big-car values," wrote one tester, "with the aesthetics of Europe's and Japan's best luxo-tourers."

The heart of the Eldorado is its 4.9-liter V-8. Described as "smooth, quiet, and strong," its abundance of torque (275 pound-feet) translated into asphalt-gobbling acceleration on the road. And matching the engine beat for beat was Cadillac's electronic speed-sensitive suspension, providing plush highway ride quality, as well as stable, balanced handling characteristics.

One driver wrote, "The Eldorado is surprisingly agile for its size; it's definitely a big car, but doesn't react like the typical American luxo-boats of years past." Another noted, "For the way most people drive, the Eldo's compliant but controlled ride makes more sense than that of the stiffer Lexus SC 400."

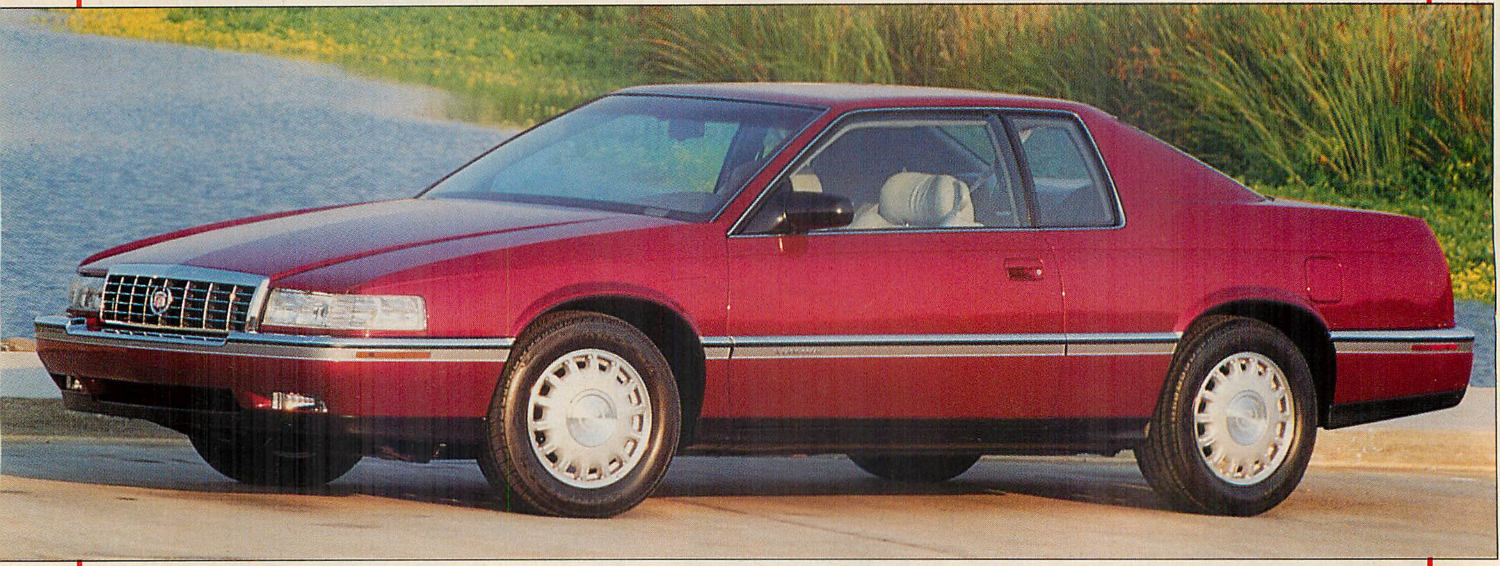
Steering was described as precise, although a few felt it was still too light, lacking substantial road feel. And braking was regarded as stable, but with a slight pull to the left in hard, straight-line stopping.

The Eldorado's new lines are clean and contemporary. One judge noted that the minimal use of chrome and other dress-up items allow its distinctive styling to stand on its own. However, examples of poor exterior trim fit were also noted.

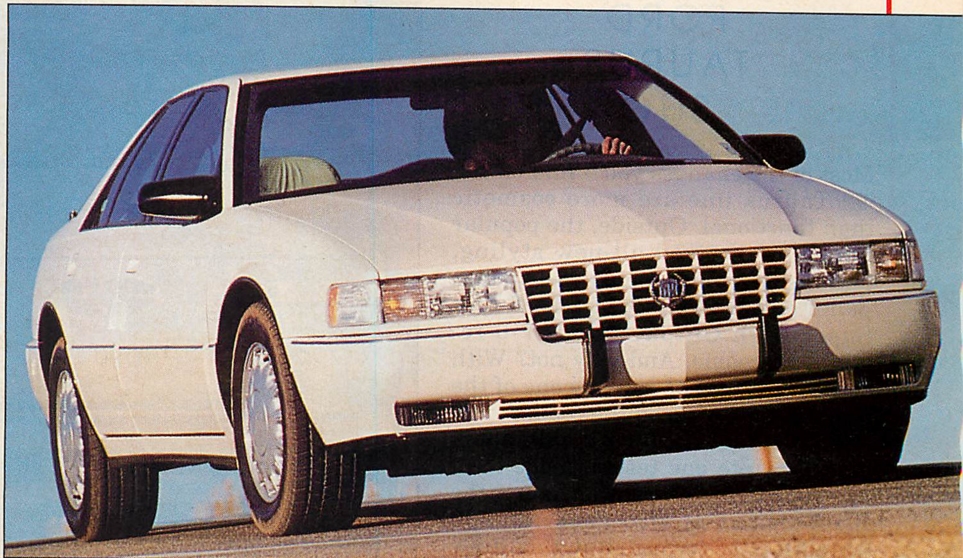
The interior, meanwhile, offered "an excellent level of comfort." "The design and materials are first class, complemented by an attractive dash." Minor annoyances included LCD displays washed out by sunlight and a blind spot created by the C-pillar in certain situations.

Overall, the Eldo was rated highly, placing in the top three in six of the eight judges' tallies. One summed it up: "Cadillac's finally given us what we've asked for. It challenges any luxury car from anywhere."

Base price: $34,970
Price as tested: $36,652
2-door, 5-passenger
front engine, front drive
4894 cc OHV V-8
200 hp @ 4100 rpm
275 lb-ft @ 3000 rpm
4-sp. auto.
108.0-in. wheelbase
3612-lb curb weight



CADILLAC SEVILLE TOURING SEDAN



"This is a Cadillac?!" scribbled one tester. "Without the nomenclature, I could've been convinced it was a new luxury import rather than a full-size American luxury car."

With the Seville Touring Sedan, Cadillac has turned an important corner, producing a car that not only sheds the traditional luxo-cruiser image, but is capable of competing successfully against the world's best. This feeling was common among our eight editors. "It's easy to forget you're not in a Lexus, BMW, or Mercedes," noted one judge.

The STS' speed-sensitive suspension system was universally praised for its masterful blending of ride quality and handling prowess. "Cadillac has done a brilliant job on the Seville's suspension," wrote one driver. "And its ride and wheel control at the limit are probably on a par with the Lexus LS 400." Steering feel, however, was criticized by judges as a bit light and disconnected, especially on the highway.

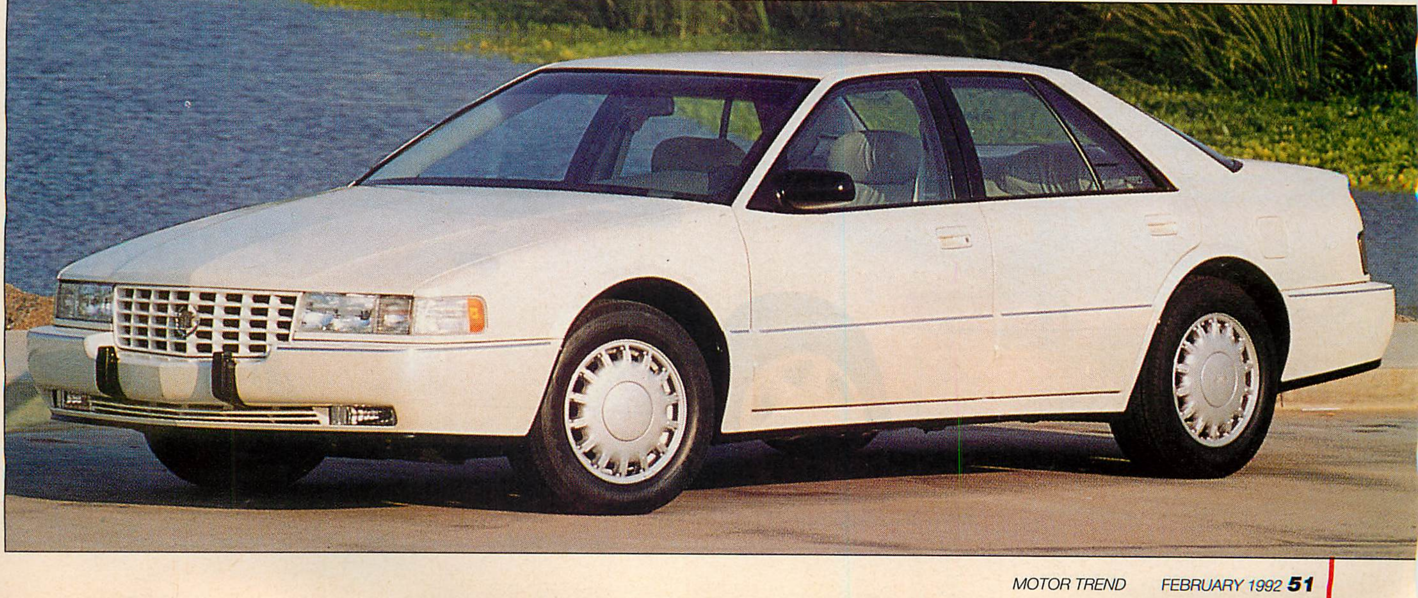
Base price: $37,975
Price as tested: $39,997
4-door, 5-passenger
front engine, front drive
4894 cc OHV V-8
200 hp @ 4100 rpm
275 lb-ft @ 3000 rpm
4-sp. auto.
111.0-in. wheelbase
3707-lb curb weight

Its exterior appeal garnered the highest collective scores of any car in any category, although we did note some sloppy exterior trim fits.

The STS' 200-horsepower 4.9-liter V-8 was complimented for its strong torque and aggressive throttle response. One judge even made a special mention of how the "exhaust note growls with refined authority." Another wrote that "the STS doesn't match the powertrain sophistication of Lexus, Mercedes-Benz, or Infiniti, but everything else is spot-on or better."

The interior was also well received, with one tester noting the "superb wood trim, supple leather, and excellent stereo" in particular, and another praising the "contemporary, even artful dash design."

Overall, the STS drew many accolades. Perhaps this entry shows the feelings of all. "Other cars in this class still hold to the old party line—whatever the traditional buyer wanted 10 years ago, he still wants. Wrong. I think the STS proves how quickly American cars can improve."



FORD TAURUS SHO

Most of the changes you'll find on the '92 Taurus line are more cosmetic *than functional.* Outside, the popular Ford has received all-new styling, and inside, a redesigned instrument panel and interior trim. The 3-liter Super High Output (SHO) V-6 remains the same. And why not? With 220 horsepower on tap, it's one of the *most spirited* V-6s on the road.

"The SHO is a formidable sport sedan," wrote one tester. Aside from its impressive horsepower figure, the SHO engine is also good for 200 pound-feet of torque. But this drew mixed reviews. One judge called it a "nice powerband. The torque will pull top gear from 1200 rpm." Another, found the engine's low-end torque disappointing, admitting, though, that "once wound up, it's a blast."

Getting the power to the ground is a five-speed manual, the only transmission available for the Taurus SHO. A new linkage was designed to smooth out the shifting duties, but opinions were split. Several staffers felt as this one did: "The SHO's new shift linkage is a tremendous improvement in feel and operation." While others still found it notchy and bothersome.

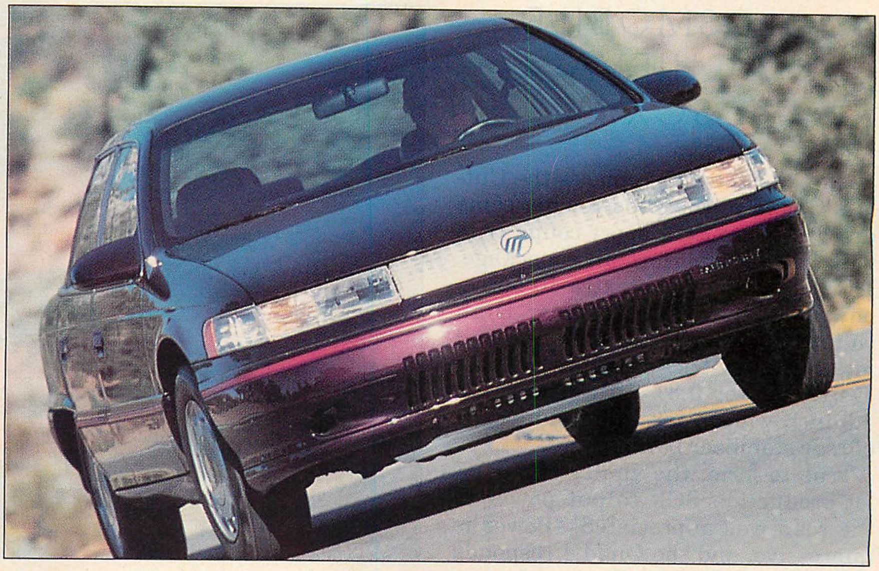
Impressions of the SHO's handling were generally favorable. "This car can be driven fast with supreme confidence and control," noted one. Another agreed; "Handling is predictable and balanced." A couple writers, however, found the steering somewhat dead on-center, "especially noticeable when transitioning from a left to right turn or vice versa."

The new styling also opened to a mixed reception. The seats were complimented for being comfortable and supportive. One tester wrote, "The dash is nicely sculpted, but there's a limit to how much of a plastic appearance I can take." Another felt, "It still looks fairly bland, and the interior layout is a little confused."

However, with its potent powerplant, aggressive handling, and many extras, the SHO is still a capable, fun-to-drive, sporting sedan that adds plenty of zip to your driving.

Base price: $23,772
Price as tested: $26,301
4-door, 5-passenger
front engine, front drive
2986 cc DOHC V-6
220 hp @ 6200 rpm
200 lb-ft @ 4800 rpm
5-sp. man.
106.0-in. wheelbase
3309-lb curb weight

MERCURY SABLE LS



Like its corporate sister, the Ford Taurus, the major changes on Mercury's Sable are primarily in styling and design. Outside, the Sable sports new sheetmetal, cladding, bumpers, lights, and wheels, while inside, it gains a redesigned instrument panel and seat and door trim. Other notable improvements include variable-assist power steering as standard equipment and the availability of an optional passenger-side airbag.

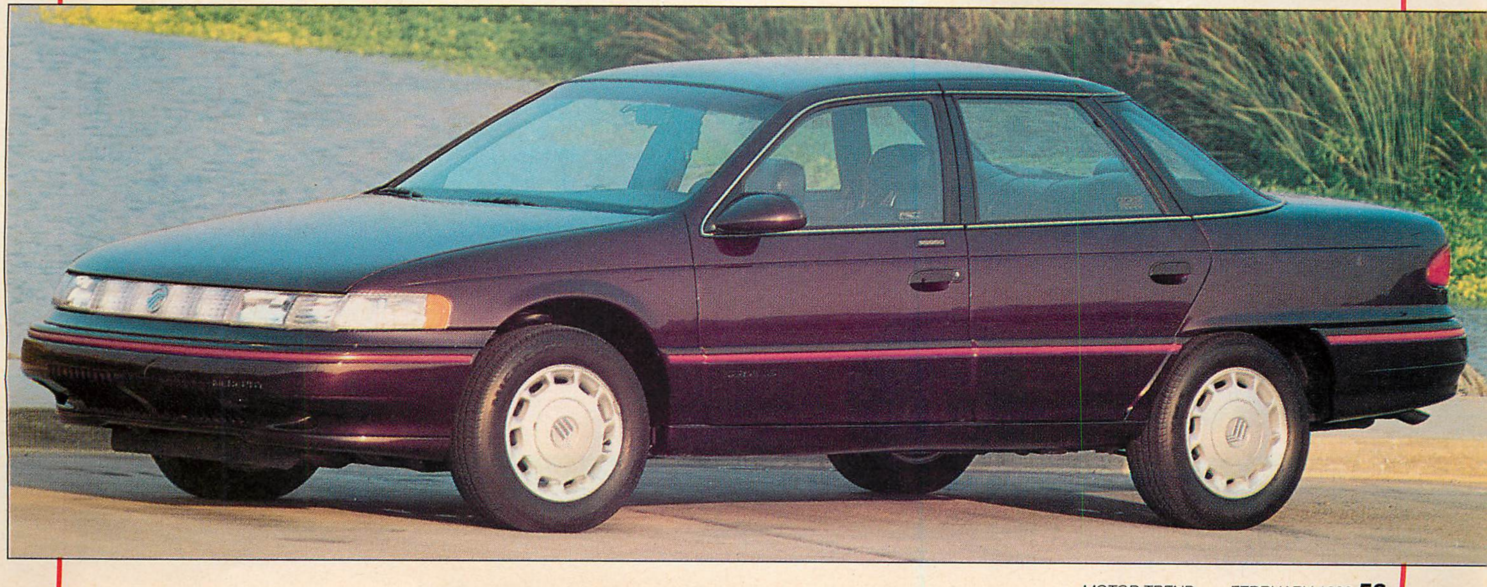
Overall, the '92 Sable LS impressed our group as a stylish, comfortable family sedan that's long on extras. One tester wrote, "The Sable is still the fine value it's always been, only now you can get it with a passenger-side airbag." Another expanded the thought, calling the car "fully competent for a family transporter, but you'll never mistake it for a sport sedan."

Several judges complimented the LS on its smooth, compliant ride, with one writing that "ride quality is improved commendably." Overall chassis dynamics were also well received. One editor called the Sable "remarkably stable for a family sedan, with good balance and feel." Handling capabilities, however, were limited. Several drivers pointed to substantial understeer, with one noting, "quite a bit of tire squeal under any type of enthusiastic cornering." A mysterious bumping sound was also noticed in the rear of our test vehicle under hard cornering.

As with the Taurus, reviews on the Sable's new look were mixed. Several judges felt the exterior styling represented a big improvement in character and personality, and offered similar praise for the Sable's interior. But a couple evaluators candidly preferred the lines and layout of its predecessor

Features that drew positive comments included remote radio controls mounted high on the dash, auto-locking door latches, convenient cupholders, trunk luggage net, and double visors. The bottom line on the Sable? "It's still a great family sedan."

Base price: $17,301
Price as tested: $23,344
4-door, 5-passenger
front engine, front drive
3802 cc OHV V-6
140 hp @ 3800 rpm
215 lb-ft @ 2200 rpm
4-sp. auto.
106.0-in. wheelbase
3191-lb curb weight

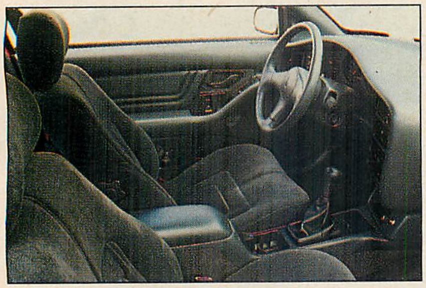


OLDSMOBILE ACHIEVA SCX

The Achieva, which replaces the Cutlass Calais in the Olds lineup, came dressed in its SCX sport coupe trim with the W41 performance package. The package adds an extra 10 horsepower to the SCX's 2.3-liter High Output 16-valve Quad 4 engine and includes a low-back-pressure exhaust system, lower 0.81 fifth gear ratio, 1.3-inch wider rear axle, and a pair of rear stabilizer bars.

True to form, the ability of our pilot-production SCX to put power to the road was appreciated. "Power is impressive, and the Quad 4 responds instantly to changes in throttle setting." Unfortunately, this power was accompanied by uninhibited noise and vibration, especially in the 4000-5000-rpm range, which drew complaints from many judges. "This Olds packs a big performance wallop surpassed only by its noise and vibration quotient," wrote one tester.

In several judges' notes, the SCX was praised for its tight, linear steering, quick responsiveness, controllable handling, and fun-to-drive factor. One driver wrote that, while the NVH problem is uncharacteristic of Oldsmobile cars, "the handling prowess and cornering capability is also un-Olds-like; and that's good."



Opinions on styling were split. While one praised the "well-sculpted interior" and "BMW-ish dashboard," another criticized the poor tactile feel and fit-and-finish, calling it "corporate parts buying without regard for Olds' higher-priced image."

Rear seat room was considered good for a compact coupe, and the fold-down rear seats complimented, although one mid-size staffer complained of hitting his head on the rear glass. Others were annoyed by the door-mounted seatbelts and auto-locking doors that don't auto-unlock.

Overall, our test vehicle was considered a lot of fun to drive, although somewhat unrefined. One editor wrote, "Except for the engine noise, this is a nice sport coupe." Another echoed the sentiments: "For aggressive road driving, the Achieva is remarkably capable."

Base price: $15,200 (est.)
Price as tested: $17,271
2-door, 5-passenger
front engine, front drive
2260 cc DOHC inline 4
190 hp @ 6800 rpm
160 lb-ft @ 5200 rpm
5-sp. man.
106.0-in. wheelbase
2816-lb curb weight

W41
Achieva SCX

OLDSMOBILE EIGHTY EIGHT ROYALE LS

In creating this latest incarnation of the Eighty Eight, the primary objective of Olds' designers was to bring the car full boogie into the '90s, with contemporary form and function that would allow this full-size sedan to compete successfully not only with fellow American sedans, but with mid-size imports, as well.

The result is a car that impressed us all with its comfortable ride and roomy interior, but failed to inspire much passion. One tester wrote, "This is a pleasant family car with good interior space and comfortable seating." Another said "Ride quality is quite good—in line with the best offered by Detroit." But a third finished the thought, "Although there's little to get really excited about, there's also little to seriously fault."

While overall space utilization was rated highly, all were divided over the dash layout. Every tester took specific note of the 58 control buttons on the dash. And one expressed the sentiments of all, "Can we *puh-leeze* get over the button mania?!"

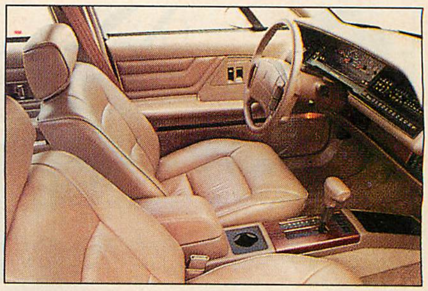
Either in spite or because of the perceived clutter, radio and ventilation buttons on the steering wheel were appreciated. And another judge wrote, "The simple dash lines help compensate for the busy control pod." Unexpected praise came for the high quality of the Eighty Eight's simulated wood, especially in contrast to that in the Bonneville.

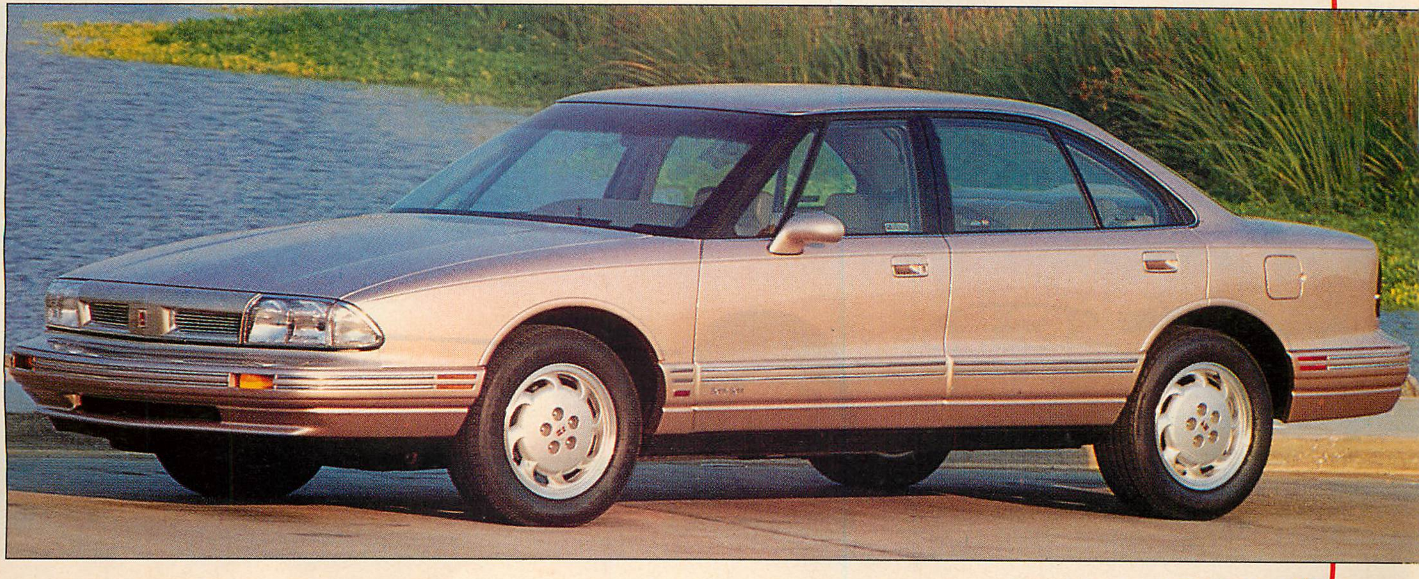
The Eighty Eight's 3800 V-6 did its job competently, but without fanfare. And the fully independent suspension and chassis worked surprisingly well, compared with other full-size American sedans. "The Eighty Eight is predictable and easy to drive, and never dramatically misbehaves."

Steering was criticized as overboosted with poor on-center feel, but the brakes exhibited "good straight-line stability and modulation."

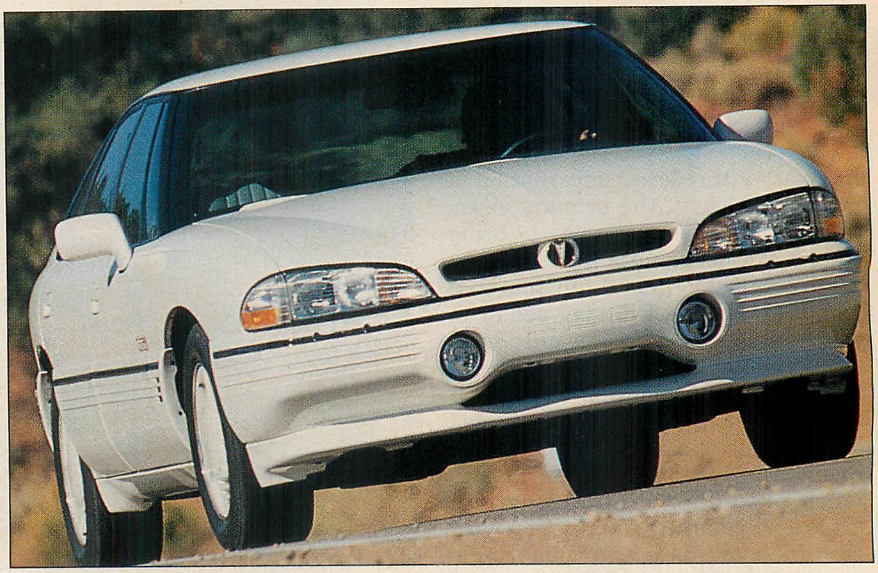
Overall, the Eighty Eight was considered competent, well-mannered, and comfortable. "It's a family sedan you can easily live with. But for the import wars, it needs an injection of personality."

Base price: $21,395
Price as tested: $23,901
4-door, 5-passenger
front engine, front drive
3792 cc OHV V-6
170 hp @ 4800 rpm
220 lb-ft @ 3200 rpm
4-sp. auto.
110.8-in. wheelbase
3468-lb curb weight





PONTIAC BONNEVILLE SSEi

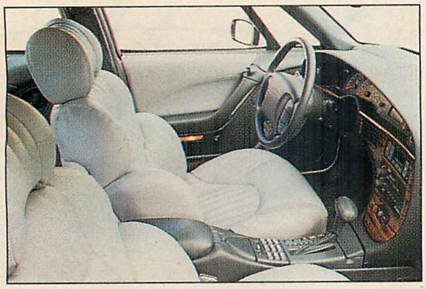


For '92, the Bonneville has metamorphosed from a conventional full-size American sedan into a streamlined, well-balanced import fighter. And for good measure, the top-of-the-line SSEi model has been infused with an Eaton supercharger and an array of convenience and comfort extras that justify its $28,045 base price ($29,605 as tested).

Several complimented the SSEi for its "excellent blend of comfort, sportiness, and luxury." The suspension offered a plush ride quality in most situations, as well as surprisingly good control on twisty roads. "Pretty impressive for a big car," wrote one editor, "dare I say, even fun?"

Most testers felt the mildly supercharged V-6 was just right for this class of vehicle, with one noting "The engine is as slick as a big V-8, with a similar quality of seamless power." Only one wished for a more aggressive power delivery.

The interior drew a mixed bag of responses. Overall, the SSEi offers "a comfortable cabin to spend time in." Yet, while the seats provide good comfort and excellent adjustability, several judges felt that "the needlessly confusing array of seat controls is overkill." The quality of the plastic woodgrain dash was highly criticized. "The Bonneville has an attractive, contemporary dash design, but imitation wood doesn't belong on a car in this price range."

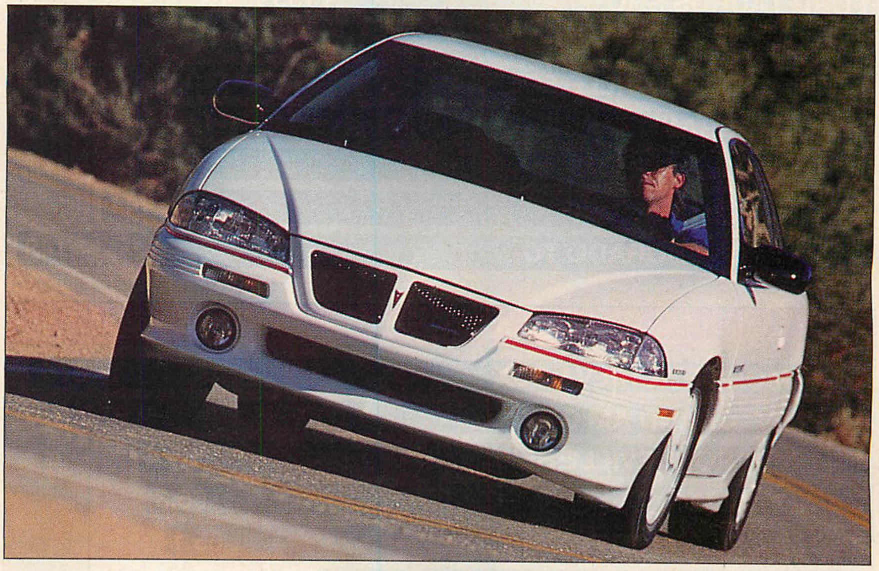


Aside from these pet peeves, several testers agreed, "The SSEi's little extras add a lot to its value." These include cupholders, rear vent outlets, double visors, trunk pass-through, electrical outlets in the overhead console, steering wheel radio controls, head-up display, and air valve and accessory kit in the trunk.

One judge summed up the SSEi as, "A car you want to like because Pontiac has the guts to take a chance with both the interior and exterior design." But perhaps the best testimonial to its success is that the SSEi finished in the top three of every score sheet. As one staffer wrote, "This is a great American car!"

Base price: $28,045
Price as tested: $29,605
4-door, 5-passenger
front engine, front drive
3792 cc OHV V-6
supercharged
205 hp @ 4200 rpm
260 lb-ft @ 2600 rpm
4-sp. auto.
110.8-in. wheelbase
3691-lb curb weight

PONTIAC GRAND AM GT



As the top-selling compact coupe in the U.S. and the car responsible for about one third of Pontiac's overall sales, the all-new Grand Am has a lot of expectations to live up to. Fortunately, the GT sport coupe we tested won friends handily among our editors with its responsive handling, High-Output 2.3-liter 16-valve Quad 4 engine, and fresh, new styling.

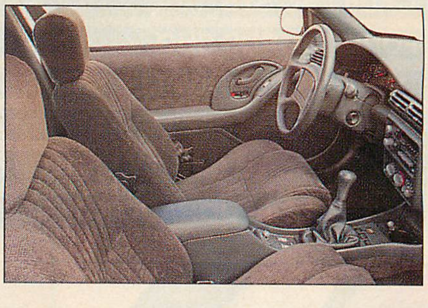
"This is a fun car to drive hard," noted one tester. "It's responsive, powerful, and capable. And is seriously good in turns." This feeling was echoed over and over in the logbooks, thanks to the GT's sport-tuned suspension and sticky GT+4 tires. "The GT is agile, quick, and well balanced for a front-drive car," wrote another.

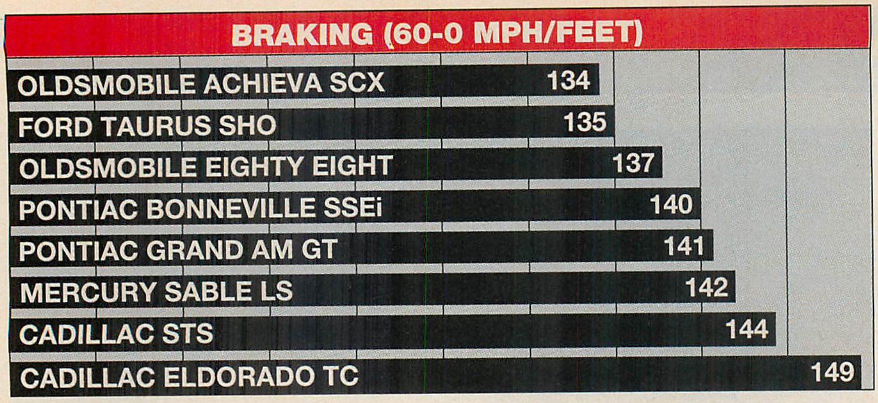
The High-Output Quad 4 was generally complimented for its acceleration and responsiveness. However, all eight staffers made note of its excessively loud buzziness. One wrote, "I like to feel a car's power, but not through the seat of my pants." And another noted, "A noisy engine gives the impression that this is a less solid car than it really is." A couple judges leveled criticisms at the notchy shift linkage of our five-speed manual.

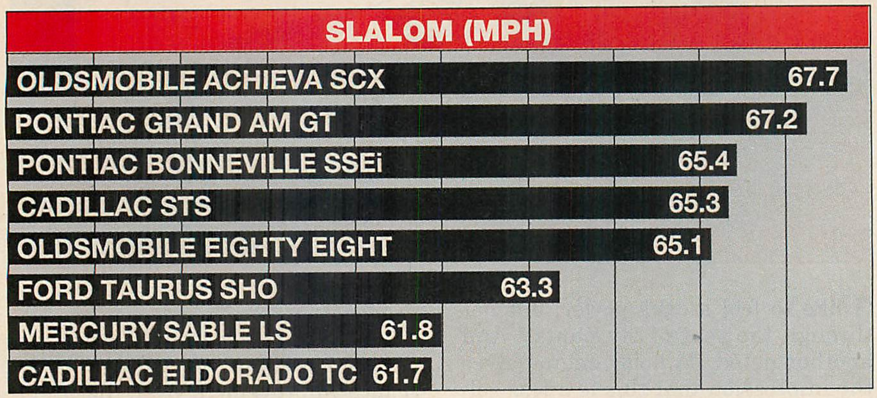
As for the GT's new look, "The sporty interior and fresh, street-racer exterior, derived from Pontiac's auto show cars, represents a promising direction for GM's excitement division." Areas needing improvement noted by individual testers included an off-axis steering wheel, excessive glare on the windshield, door-mounted seatbelts, and poor instrument-panel graphics. "Overall ergonomics and interior layout are good, but quality of materials and fit-and-finish need more work."

Final thoughts on the GT were positive, but realistic. One judge wrote, "A nice improvement over the previous Grand Am, but there's still more to do." Another summed it up: "If you don't mind the noisy engine, you'll find the Grand Am a high-performance piece that still offers reasonable interior space and utility."

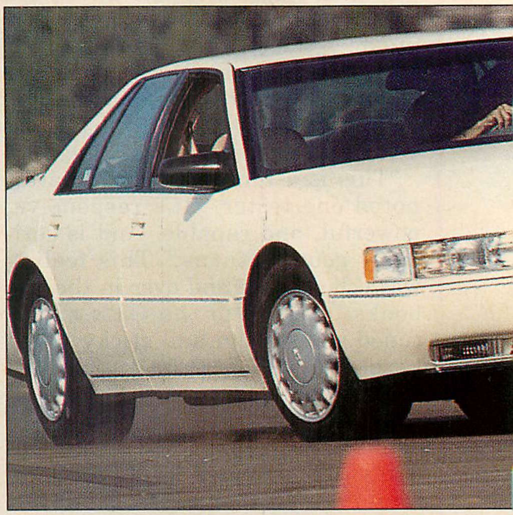
Base price: $13,699
Price as tested: $16,535
4-door, 5-passenger
front engine, front drive
2260 cc DOHC inline 4
180 hp @ 6200 rpm
160 lb-ft @ 5200 rpm
5-sp. man.
103.4-in. wheelbase
2804-lb curb weight

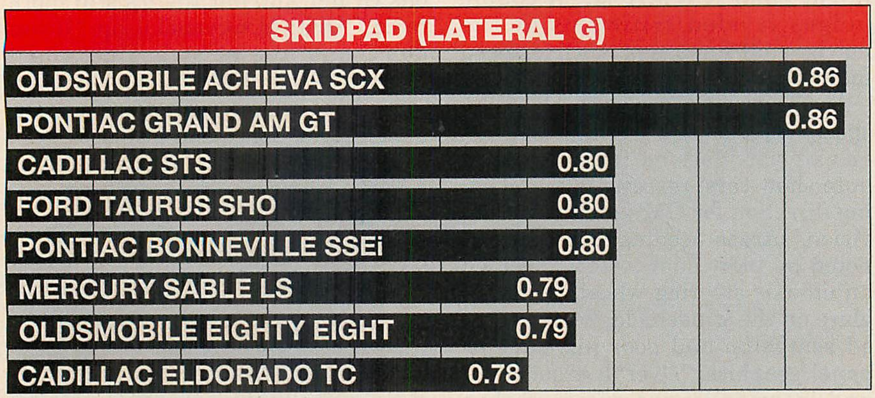



BRAKING (60-0 MPH/FEET)


SLALOM (MPH)

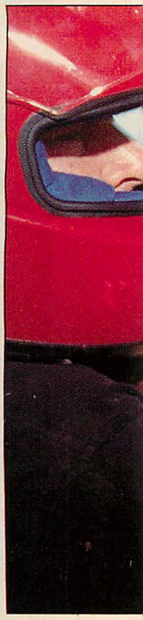
OLDSMOBILE ACHIEVA SCX 67.7
PONTIAC GRAND AM GT 67.2
PONTIAC BONNEVILLE SSEi 65.4
CADILLAC STS 65.3
OLDSMOBILE EIGHTY EIGHT 65.1
FORD TAURUS SHO 63.3
MERCURY SABLE LS 61.8
CADILLAC ELDORADO TC 61.7

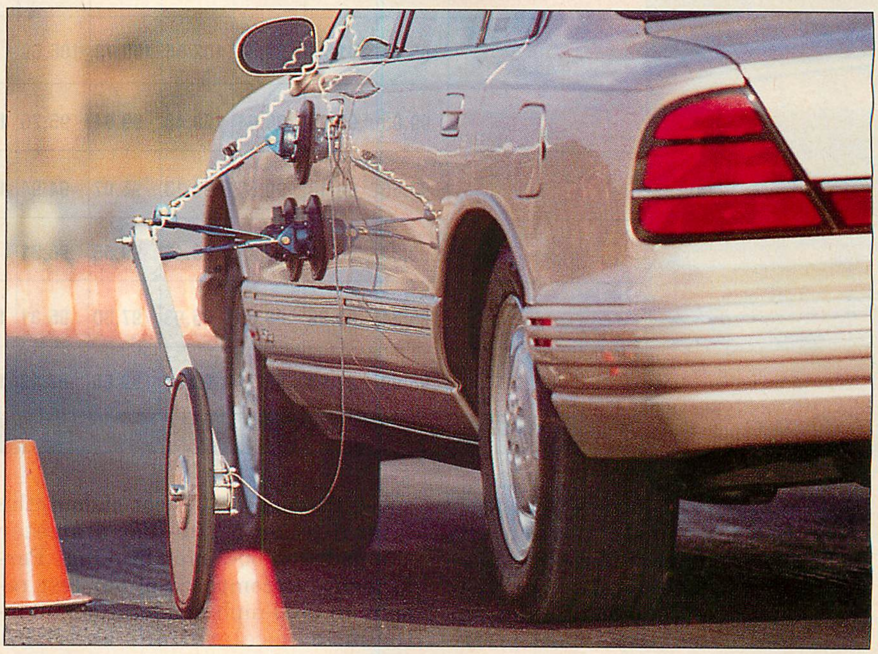



SKIDPAD (LATERAL G)

OLDSMOBILE ACHIEVA SCX 0.86
PONTIAC GRAND AM GT 0.86
CADILLAC STS 0.80
FORD TAURUS SHO 0.80
PONTIAC BONNEVILLE SSEi 0.80
MERCURY SABLE LS 0.79
OLDSMOBILE EIGHTY EIGHT 0.79
CADILLAC ELDORADO TC 0.78

MOTOR TREND



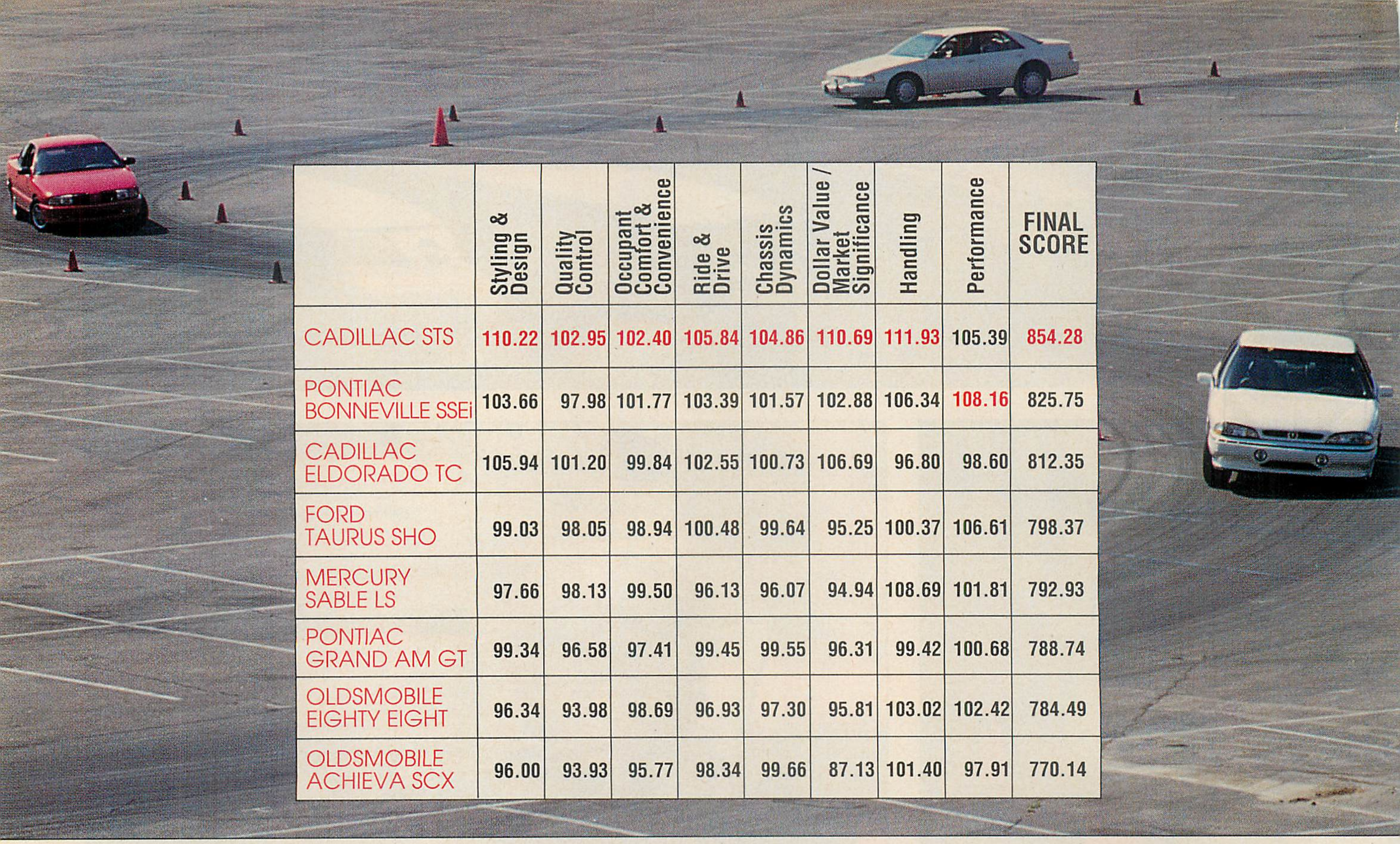


FUEL ECONOMY IN MPG (CITY/HWY.)

	City	Hwy.
OLDSMOBILE ACHIEVA SCX	21	31
PONTIAC GRAND AM GT	21	31
MERCURY SABLE LS	18	28
OLDSMOBILE EIGHTY EIGHT	18	28
FORD TAURUS SHO	18	26
CADILLAC STS	16	25
CADILLAC ELDORADO TC	16	25
PONTIAC BONNEVILLE SSEi	16	25

ACCELERATION (SEC/MPH) 0-60 MPH/QUARTER MILE

	0-60 MPH	Quarter Mile
FORD TAURUS SHO	6.8	15.2/94.0
PONTIAC GRAND AM GT	7.5	15.9/89.2
PONTIAC BONNEVILLE SSEi	8.1	16.1/86.4
OLDSMOBILE ACHIEVA SCX	8.0	16.2/86.3
CADILLAC ELDORADO TC	8.3	16.2/83.6
CADILLAC STS	8.4	16.4/83.3
OLDSMOBILE EIGHTY EIGHT	9.2	16.8/83.0
MERCURY SABLE LS	9.4	17.0/80.7



	Styling & Design	Quality Control	Occupant Comfort & Convenience	Ride & Drive	Chassis Dynamics	Dollar Value / Market Significance	Handling	Performance	FINAL SCORE
CADILLAC STS	110.22	102.95	102.40	105.84	104.86	110.69	111.93	105.39	854.28
PONTIAC BONNEVILLE SSEi	103.66	97.98	101.77	103.39	101.57	102.88	106.34	108.16	825.75
CADILLAC ELDORADO TC	105.94	101.20	99.84	102.55	100.73	106.69	96.80	98.60	812.35
FORD TAURUS SHO	99.03	98.05	98.94	100.48	99.64	95.25	100.37	106.61	798.37
MERCURY SABLE LS	97.66	98.13	99.50	96.13	96.07	94.94	108.69	101.81	792.93
PONTIAC GRAND AM GT	99.34	96.58	97.41	99.45	99.55	96.31	99.42	100.68	788.74
OLDSMOBILE EIGHTY EIGHT	96.34	93.98	98.69	96.93	97.30	95.81	103.02	102.42	784.49
OLDSMOBILE ACHIEVA SCX	96.00	93.93	95.77	98.34	99.66	87.13	101.40	97.91	770.14

SCORING

Motor Trend editors take their tasks seriously, particularly when the assignment is choosing two exceptional automobiles per year (one import, one domestic) and one truck for the industry's most prestigious awards.

The Car of the Year selection process is a finely honed protocol that carefully weighs a multitude of important factors. We measure performance with computerized test equipment and fold in a long list of personal assessments that run the gamut from "ease of entry" to "space utilization" to "fun to drive."

Since this is anything but a popularity contest, we don't directly compare dissimilar vehicles to pick the winners. In other words, a Corvette never goes head to head against a Sable station wagon. Instead, Car of the Year candidates are rated *against their peers* by comparing performance, aesthetic, and functional attributes against established references in the same class as the candidate car. The car that's the biggest step forward relative to its peer group is the Car of the Year.

The evaluation process is broken down into two major categories: Objective and Subjective. The Objective portion is made up of the last two headings on the scoring chart. Handling is made up of the vehicle's speed through a 600-foot slalom, the lateral gs on a 200-foot-diameter skidpad, and 60-0-mph braking. Performance is composed of our test results in 0-60-mph acceleration, quarter-mile acceleration, and EPA mileage.

In each case, a candidate car's performance figures are factored against the performance of a specific peer car, which we've selected and tested in advance. We're looking for an existing model that in our estimation is similar in spirit to a Car of the Year candidate and falls within the same general price range. Once we've staked out a particular type and category of car, we look for the existing (previous model year) car in that slot that's the best seller; we test the best-performing version of that car, provided it's still in the same price range as the candidate car.

Yeah, we know it sounds complicated, but the goal is dead simple—to find an existing car that's a fair yardstick to use in measuring the new contender.

On the subjective side of the scoring, there are six major categories made up of 38 personal-rating subcategories. *Motor Trend* editors rate the contenders during a one- to two-week period in a variety of driving circumstances: at the test track; on a closed, high-speed road-racing course; and over a real-world route that encompasses urban, suburban, freeway, and mountain-pass roads. In subjective scoring, *all* peer models in the appropriate class are considered. For example, to judge engine responsiveness, an editor compares the contender's performance in this area against what he considers the best available in that car's class. He does the same in the other categories, too, so the candidate must do battle with the best characteristics and parts of all its competitors, even though they might not all be from the same car.

For scoring purposes, best-in-class is always 100 points; a score of 105 points indicates the Car of the Year contender is five percent better (by measured performance or by personal assessment) than the peer car in this particular area. On the extreme right of the chart is one final score per contender, which is the simple numerical total of eight major category scores. Eight *Motor Trend* editors, representing a cumulative past experience of 78 Car of the Year programs, made up this year's jury. The Ernst & Young accounting firm monitored testing on site, tabulated scores, and audited the results of the competition.

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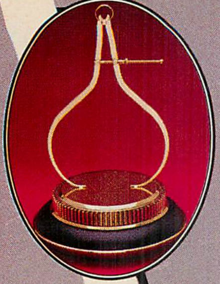
Campbell's
CHUNKY SOUP
NEW!
Classic Chicken Noodle
Campbell's®
CHUNKY SOUP
Chicken Noodle with Mushrooms

NOW THERE ARE TWO BIG WAYS TO ENJOY CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP.

New Chunky Classic Chicken Noodle. It's an honest chicken noodle soup made the Chunky way. Big. Huge chunks of chicken, broad noodles, celery and carrots all in a hearty chicken broth. Chicken noodle soup just like you'd expect only bigger.

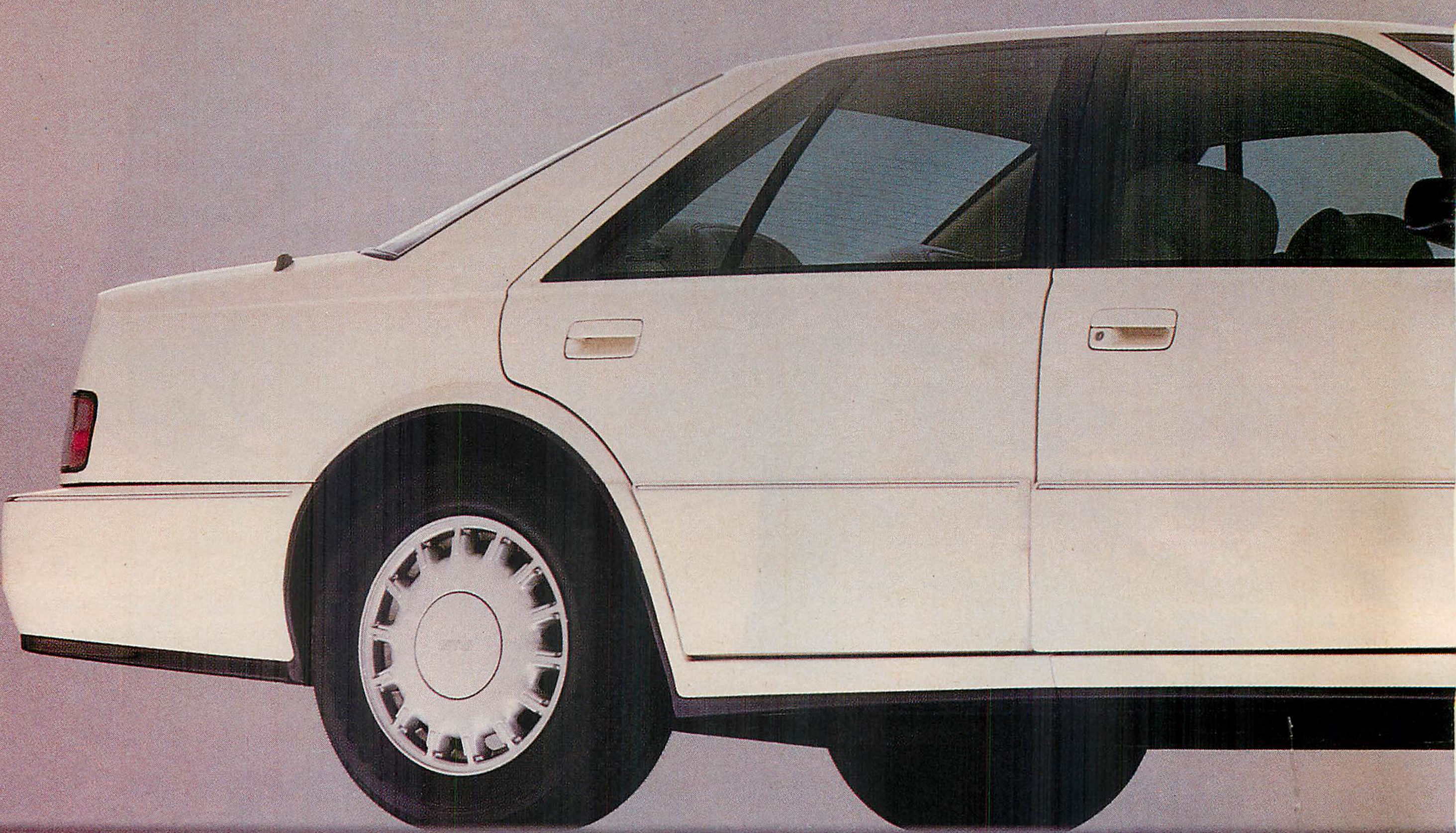
Chunky Chicken Noodle with Mushrooms. This chicken noodle soup has always been a favorite. So now you have a big choice to make. Then again, nobody says you have to choose.

CHUNKY. SOUP SO BIG, IT EATS LIKE A MEAL.



WIN

1992 CAR OF THE YEAR



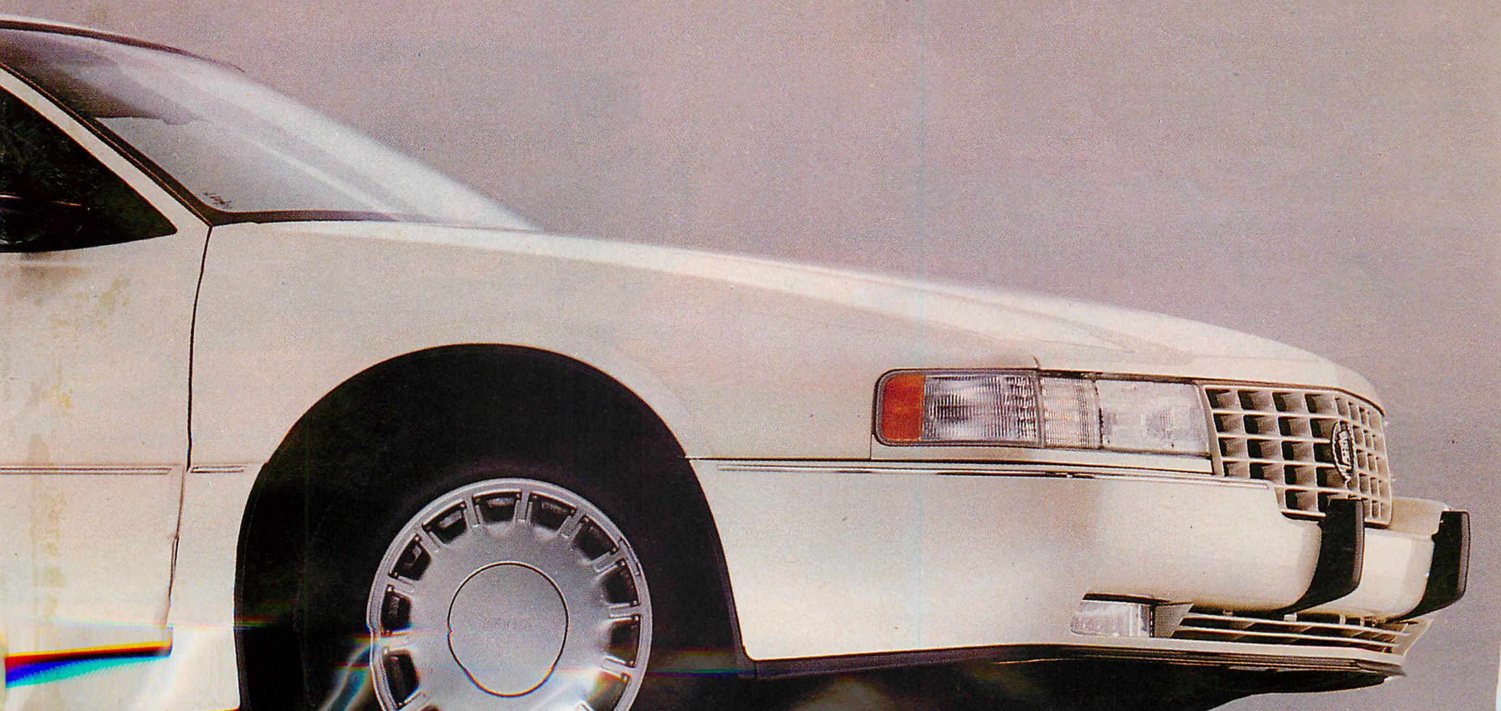
CADILLAC SEVILLE TOURING SEDAN

Motor Trend's 1992 Car of the Year is the Cadillac Seville Touring Sedan. General Manager John O. Grettenberger and his audacious band of engineers and metal-benders have crafted a precision-handling performance-oriented American luxury/sport sedan without peer in the United States, Frankly, we're probably as proud to award them the famed caliper trophy as they are to receive it.

What was the last truly important Cadillac? It may have been powered by a V-16 engine. The Allanté is a fine automobile, but it's aimed at a small slice of the marketplace. Some critical elements in a truly important automobile are broad acceptance from a wide range of customers, that it promise abundant stylistic and technical credentials—and that it deliver on those promises. In these and other ways, the STS is a truly important Cadillac, a truly important American car. And as an evocative and credible alternative to its foreign competition, the STS rekindles the long-dimmed Cadillac flame.

The new STS' change of direction from the previous model is nothing short of a hand-brake turn away from the boxy convention of the past. In styling, comfort, and performance, Cadillac is striking out for a kind of driver commonly thought to be a

NER



child of a traditional Caddy buyer. The STS looks like a car, not the box it came in. It offers no watery derivative of some vague "Euro styling," but instead the Seville tenders an intensely American spin on the blossoming theme of pedigreed international luxury/sport sedans.

Every stitch was in its place. Every exterior panel fit the next with precise and consistent tolerances. The STS is as quiet as Christmas dawn until the throttle goes to the floor, and the 4.9-liter's eight aluminum cylinders order up a chest-swelling rate of acceleration. With the extremely competent Computer Command Ride control technology automatically governing shock firmness, the precisely correct ride and handling is already achieved at any given moment, regardless of operating conditions. The refinements made to Cadillac's four-speed electronically controlled transmission make it as quiet a smooth-shifting device as we've driven, foreign or domestic. Performance-wise, the STS accelerates briskly when asked, and brakes impeccably upon demand.

The STS gets the award, but Cadillac people won it. From the Grettenbergers and Henry Meyers in the corner offices to the assembly people at the Poletown plant, to Dave Rossman, Pete Lewis, Ed Dearnley, and more who were on the test site with us, every person at Cadillac symbolically turned the screws, stitched the leather seating, and polished the car. Congratulations to all of you for a job well done.

IT SEEMS OUR NEW ULTRA-PERFORMANCE EAGLE FAMILY HAS BEEN GREETED WITH INSTANT APPROVAL.

It took almost no time at all for the world's leading performance car makers to discover the qualities of the new Eagle GS family of ultra-performance radials.

You'll now find the Eagle GS-A on the very limited-edition Ferrari F40.

You'll find the Eagle GS-C on every 1992 Corvette, including the top-of-the-line Corvette ZR-1.

You'll find the Eagle GS-D on the Lexus SC400 Coupe, the Lotus Elan, the Toyota Supra Turbo, and the 1992 Porsche Carrera 2 and 4.

All of which represents an extraordinary endorsement of the new performance-specific Eagle GS family.

But then again, these are extraordinary tires.

As a visit to your Goodyear retailer will confirm.

GOODYEAR

THE BEST TIRES IN THE WORLD HAVE GOODYEAR WRITTEN ALL OVER THEM.

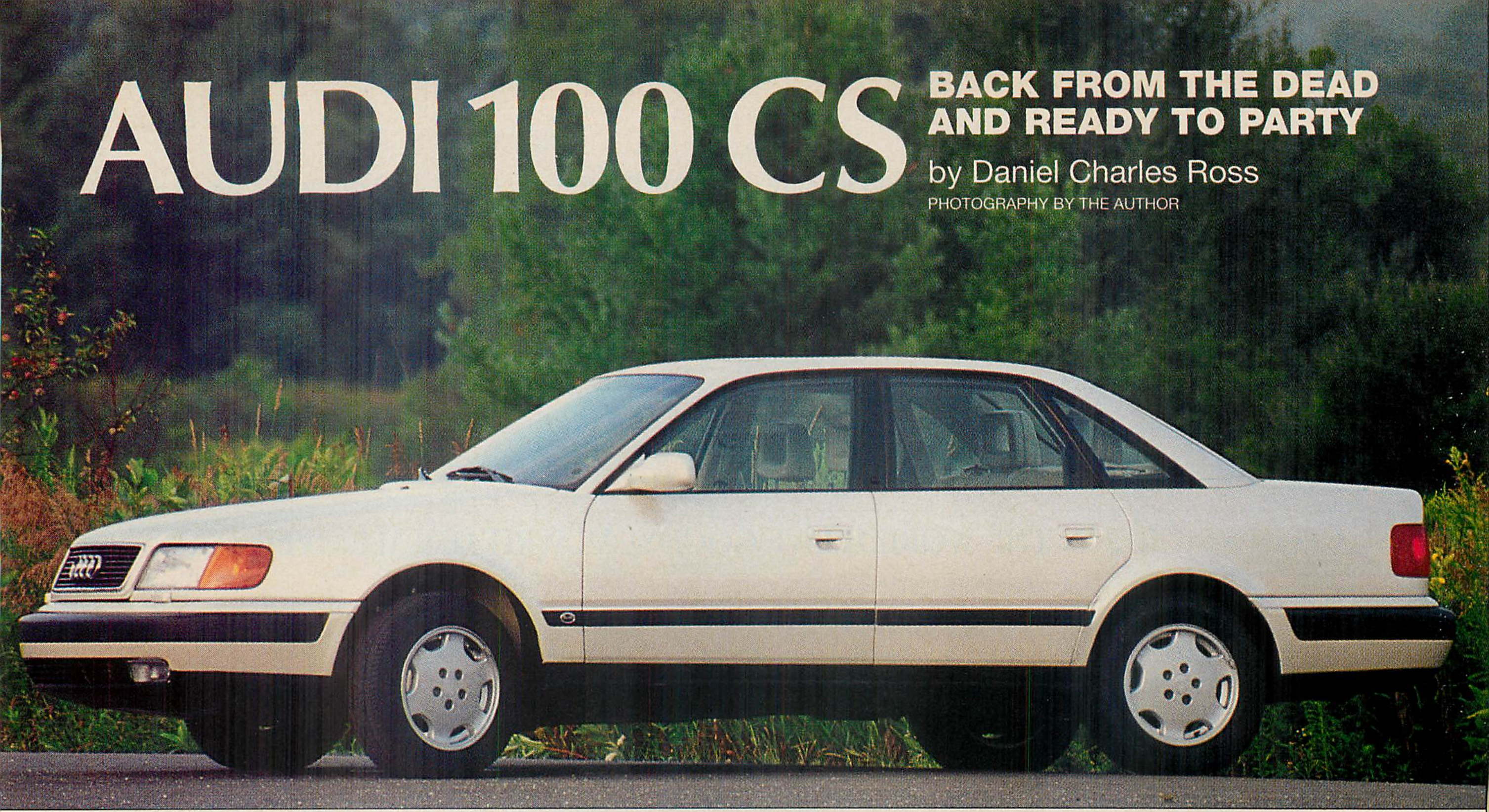
EAGLE GS-C
EAGLE GS-D
LOTUS

AUDI 100 CS

BACK FROM THE DEAD AND READY TO PARTY

by Daniel Charles Ross

PHOTOGRAPHY BY THE AUTHOR

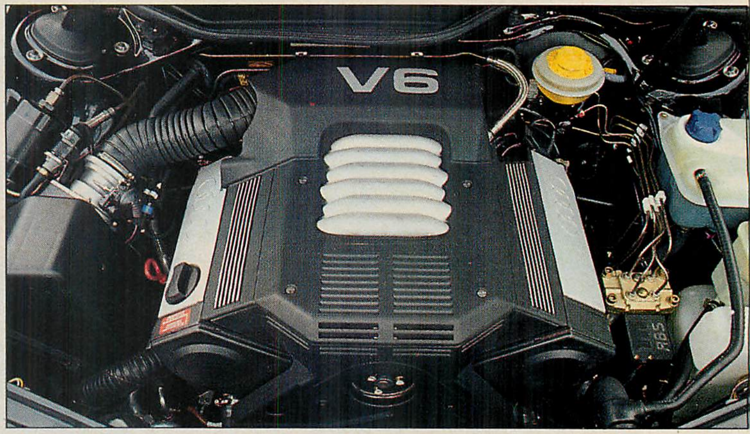


DRIVING IMPRESSION

Audi's metal-benders and powertrain engineers went to work on a new 100-series sedan like Black Forest tinkers, and the transformation is dramatic. The '92 sedan provides a fresh look and cheery infusion of performance for the mid-size German four-door, which makes the previous 100 look clunky in comparison. The new 100 is Audi's take on the direction of its products in the '90s, in direct competition with the Acura Legend Sedan, BMW 535i, and Mercedes 300E. Officials dropped broad hints that higher-performance versions and Quattro all-wheel-drive models were coming down the road, and this car is an auspicious beginning.

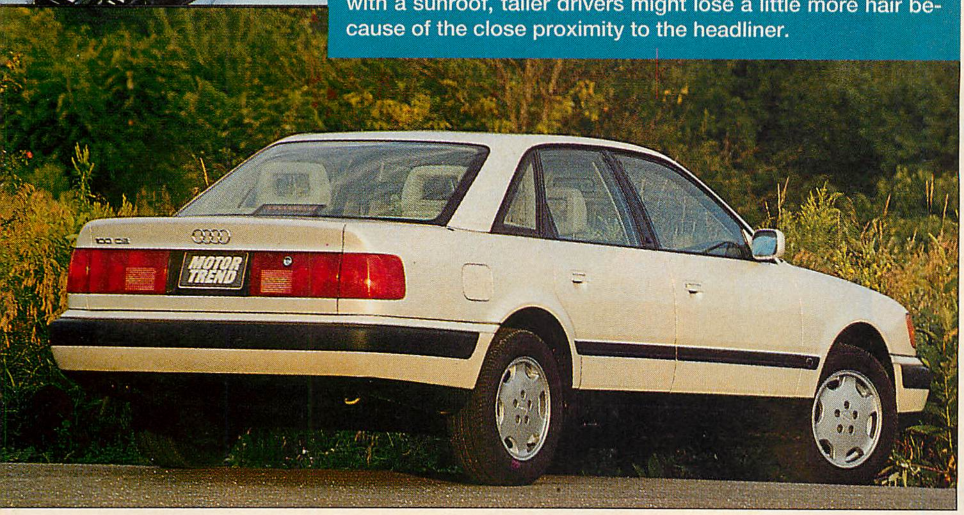
The new Audi engine is a smooth, elegant 2.8-liter SOHC V-6 with impressive gains in horsepower and torque. It replaces the previous inline five-cylinder of 2.3-liters. Like the '91 five-banger, the new six-shooter is also a cast iron block and aluminum heads with two valves per cylinder, but with a cam for each cylinder bank. A dual-path intake manifold provides impressive gains in low-end torque, giving the new 100 significantly improved punch off the line. Distributorless ignition and full electronic engine control are included, as well as multipoint fuel injection. The six offers 172 horsepower at 5500 rpm against the five-cylinder's 130 at the same rpm. Torque output is similarly improved, going from 140 pound-feet at 4500 rpm to 184 at 3000.

On the road, the benefits of the new V-6 are immediately apparent. Throttle response is snappier and the powerband broader and more robust than with the five-pot engine. Audi is quoting a 9.9-second 0-60-mph time, more than a full second quicker than its previous quote; we informally hand-clocked mid-9s on poor surfaces. Better times are a distinct possibility under ideal conditions. A five-speed manual is the standard and higher-performance gear stirrer, but a well-done four-speed automatic is available as an option. "Normal" and "Sport" shift modes are incorporated in the electronic management system.



Audi's new V-6 produces 42 more horsepower than the five-cylinder it replaces, for a total of 172 at 5500 rpm. The new engine gives the 100 significantly improved punch off the line.

Inside, the 100's seats are comfortable and supportive. All controls are logically placed and easy to read. If equipped with a sunroof, taller drivers might lose a little more hair because of the close proximity to the headliner.



TECH DATA

AUDI 100 CS

GENERAL/POWERTRAIN	
Body style	4-door, 5-passenger
Vehicle configuration	Front engine, front drive
Engine configuration	V-6, SOHC, 2 valves/cylinder
Engine displacement, ci/cc	169/2771
Horsepower, hp @ rpm, SAE net	172 @ 5500
Torque, lb-ft @ rpm, SAE net	184 @ 3000
Transmission	4-speed auto.
Axle ratio	3.70:1

DIMENSIONS	
Wheelbase, in./mm	105.8/2687
Length, in./mm	192.6/4892
Curb weight, lb	3407
Fuel capacity, gal	21.1
Fuel econmy, EPA city/hwy., mpg	19/26

CHASSIS	
Suspension, f/r	Independent/beam axle
Steering	Rack and pinion, power assist
Brakes, f/r	Vented discs/discs, ABS
Wheels	15 x 6.0, cast aluminum
Tires	195/65HR15

PRICE	
Base price	$27,700

The 100's wheelbase is up just two clicks, to 105.8 inches, and overall length is down just a sliver. Compared to the previous five-passenger model, some critical interior dimensions in the new model are changed. The best example is head room. Although the car is 0.4 inch taller, headroom is down by 0.5 inch. If it's equipped with a power sunroof, as ours was, there's an additional 1.4-inch reduction in overhead clearance. That's the difference between a baseball cap bearing an olde English "D" and your hair blowing in the wind. We did find a lot to enjoy in the cabin, however. U.S.-bound cars will get a tasteful wood trim around the shifter. The seats are comfortable yet supportive, without being hard like some German cars. The instruments and controls are arranged logically and are easy to use.

Audi says the 100's structure offers 30 percent more torsional rigidity than its predecessor, which manifests itself on the road as solidity. This is a small car with an expensive big-car feel. Curb weight in the base 100 is up by about 176 pounds, more in S and CS models, but there's no bloated feeling. Handling inspires confidence up to the safety valve of controlled understeer. Suspended by MacPherson struts in front and a torsion beam axle in the rear, with front and rear anti-roll bars, the 100 has impeccable road manners. Speed-sensitive power-assisted rack-and-pinion steering offers plenty of useful road feel.

Audi officials are in wide circulation with English reprints of a story in the authoritative German buff book *Auto Motor und Sport* that picks the 100 over a BMW 525i and Mercedes-Benz 260E (only sold in Germany), but with all due respect to our German colleagues, *those are home-country cars sold to local boys.* In the partisan and brand-conscious United States, the swath chopped through the cotton by BMW's spinning propeller is long, wide, and continuous. We're looking forward to a full test of the 100 against its peers, but for now, our first driving impression makes one thing clear: Audi's scrappy 100 CS is proof the company's serious about tackling tough players. You can't buy heart like that.

THE 100 IS PROOF AUDI IS SERIOUS ABOUT TACKLING THE TOUGH PLAYERS

Pride alone, however, won't guarantee success. The world luxury-sport market is no longer defined by pensive German cars that stride manfully in and autocratically take the choicest pieces, leaving everyone else to squabble over the hind parts. After weathering its battle over the disastrous and unfounded "unintended acceleration" flap, Audi is a survivor. Folks with fight like that are dangerous, and everyone at Audi has fight like that. But the most intriguing aspect of the story is yet to come. It isn't how the Audi 100 will duel only with the likes of BMW and Mercedes—but also with Cadillac, Acura, and Lexus. **MT**

NEW ENGINE, NEW TRANSMIS
AND TO THINK MOST PEOPLE

On September 1, 1991, the presses at *Car and Driver* rolled and declared the Nissan® Maxima® SE the "Best Import Sports Sedan under $25,000."

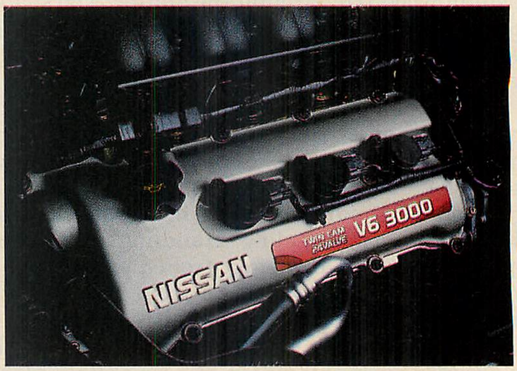
That night the engineers at Nissan quietly celebrated.

And took pleasure in the knowledge that the press hadn't, well, seen anything yet. For that same month the new 1992 Maxima was launched. A car our engineers had completely reexamined, revamped, and retooled, literally from the ground up.

One glance at the 1992 engine and you immediately detect a perfectionist mentality bordering on the obsessive. For there lies a new 3.0-liter, 24-valve DOHC V6 multi-point, fuel-injected variable valve timed engine.

The new 1992 Maxima SE shown in Super Black with optional ABS brakes, driver's side airbag and four-speed automatic transmission.

Like our legendary Z,™ the Maxima SE's new 3.0-liter, 190 hp 24-valve DOHC V6 engine features a variable-induction dual plenum system on the 5-speed which utilizes an intermediate valve to regulate air intake flow for better performance at low to mid-range RPMs.



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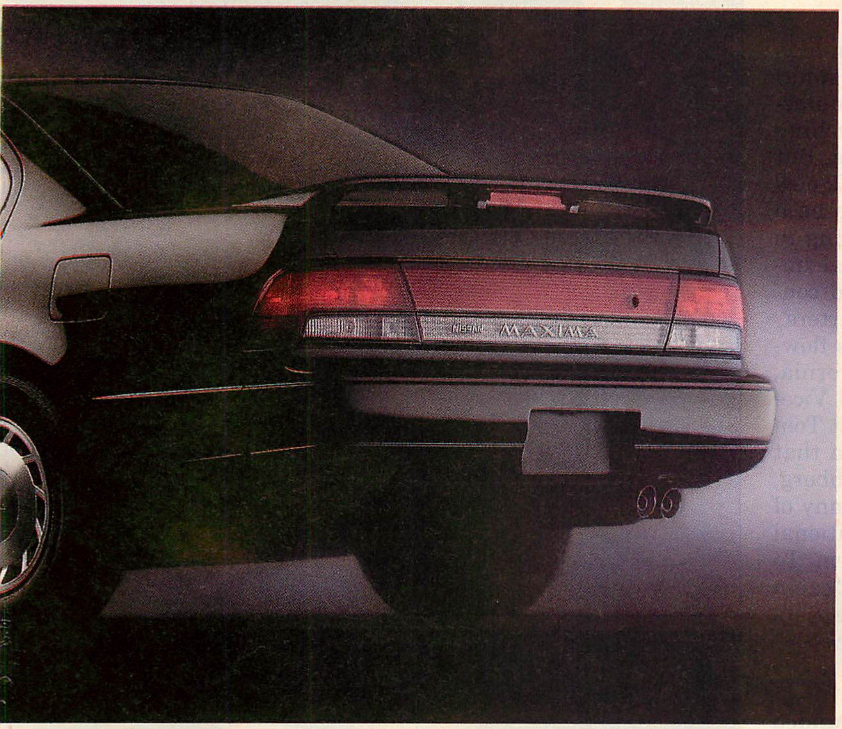
*†All-new fully electronic automatic transmission. *Source: Car and Driver 11/91 versus 9/91. For more*

SION, IMPROVED SUSPENSION, LIKED IT THE WAY IT WAS.



whichever front wheel has greater traction. So both stability and your self-composure are never lost.

And a remarkable revamped 4-wheel independent suspension system allows you to negotiate curves without compromising responsiveness or performance.

As a result, the 0-60 time has been reduced by more than a second to a seat-pressing 6.7 seconds.* And horsepower has surged to an adrenalin-pumping 190. Giving new meaning to the term, 4-Door Sports Car.™

Of course, in our engineers' minds, a totally new engine dictated equally radical changes to the transmission.†

A new front Viscous Limited Slip Differential transfers additional power to

Some things on the Maxima, however, take years to appreciate. Because over a two year period, the SE retains 70% of its value. That's higher than BMW 525i and Acura Legend.

All of which suggests there is one thing our engineers can't change on the Maxima SE. Our customers' satisfaction with it.

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HUMAN RACE.®

information call 1-800-NISSAN-6. Smart people always read the fine print. And they always wear their seat belts.

INFINITI J30

YESTERDAY MEETS TOMORROW

by Bob Nagy

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SCOTT DAHLQUIST

DRIVING IMPRESSION

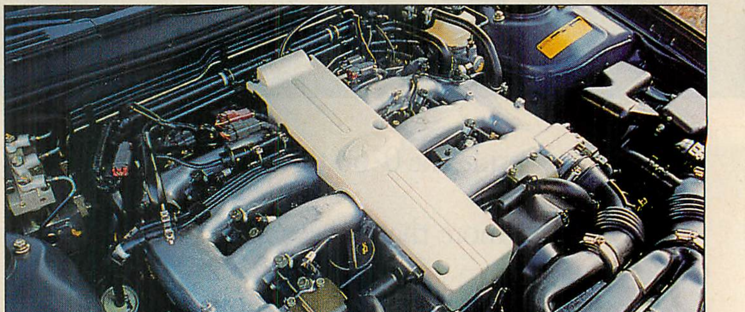
In the increasingly populous world of mid-level personal luxury sedans, every manufacturer is constantly searching for that competitive edge. But when it comes to Infiniti's new J30, the hoped-for edge may, in fact, turn out to be a curve. This upscale four-door is by no means lacking in solid performance credentials. But the J30's initial impact is primarily visual and comes from the liquid contours of its body and distinctive drop-away rear quarters.

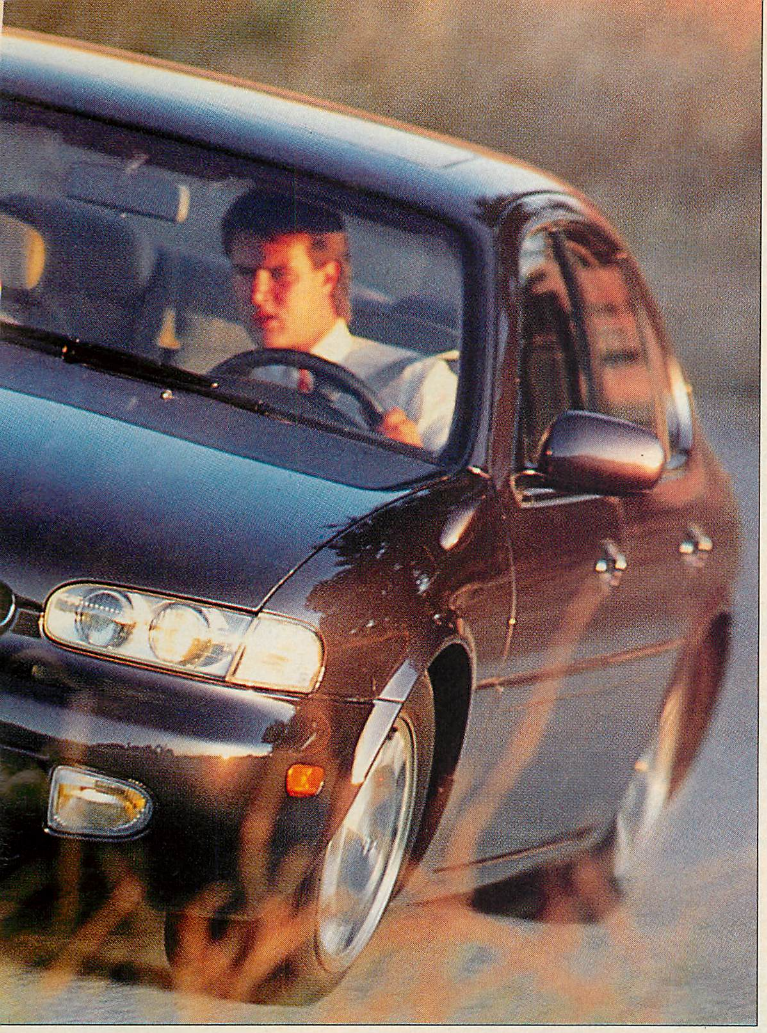
Created primarily for the U.S. market, the J30's flowing sheetmetal was conceived in San Diego, California, under the direction of Nissan Design International Vice-President Gerald Hirshberg and chief project stylist Tom Semple. The goal was to develop an upscale sedan that engendered the spirit and flavor of a coupe. Hirshberg, who proudly extolls the J30 for "breaking the tyranny of the wedge," wanted to seamlessly blend both traditional and contemporary elements into one integrated form. To optimize interior room, the vehicle also embodies a "cabin larger rather than cabin forward design." While the J30's unique tail treatment does engender a certain love-it-or-hate-it quality, we found most people were inclined to cue up on the positive side of the ledger.

Inside, the J30 continues to emphasize soft, rounded contours. Although NDI had some input into passenger compartment design, the final word belonged to Nissan in-house stylist Yasuo Yokozeki. Despite its coupe-like character, the J30 provides generous room for four full-time passengers—five in a pinch. Following Infiniti tradition, the J30 boasts highly legible analog instrumentation and first-rate control layout. But in this case, these functional elements are subtly set off by real walnut accent trim. The J30 only comes fully loaded, and the roster of standards includes leather upholstery, power sunroof, dual front airbags and seatbelt pretensioners, automatic climate control, anti-theft system, Bose AM/FM/CD/cassette quad-amp sound system, remote locking, and a full array of power assists. Sole option is a cellular telephone. Just like the top-line Q45, all J30s will be produced in Nissan's high-tech Tochigi plant.

To properly complement the luxury side of its personality, program manager Keiichi Shinohara demanded that the J30 possess an appropriate measure of sportiness. But in keeping with its dual mission, the suspension and drivetrain were developed with refined performance in mind.

Built on a 108.7-inch wheelbase, this 3525-pound luxo-sportster uses well-proven underpinnings affixed to its exceptionally rigid unibody structure via a pair of high-isolation subframes. Up front is a MacStrut and single lower control arm at each wheel, while the rear is fitted with Nissan's multilink system (our sources indicate a HICAS-equipped four-wheel-steer variant will also be along shortly). Fore and aft anti-roll bars help trim out



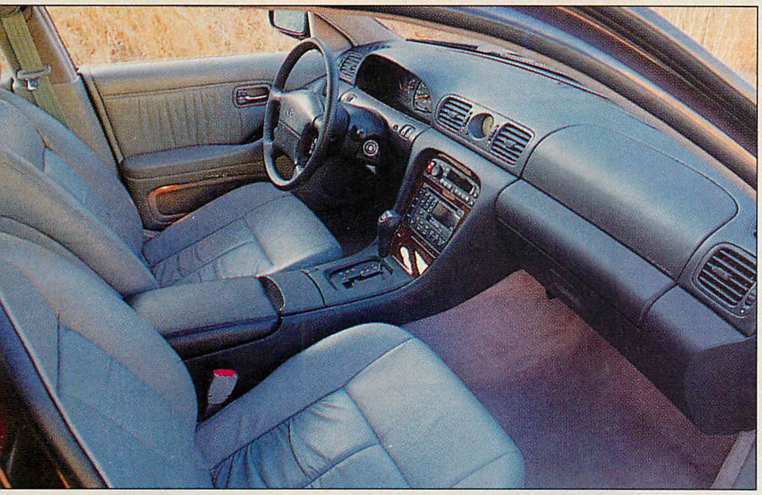


the package. The J30's speed-sensitive rack-and-pinion power steering uses the same twin-orifice pump as the Q45. A set of 215/60VR15 all-season radials mounted on 15x6.5-inch cast alloy rims supply grip, while ABS-abetted four-wheel disc brakes deliver abundant stopping power.

The J30 shares its VG30DE engine with the naturally aspirated 300ZX. However, in this application, the potent 3-liter twin-cam gets a redesigned cooling fan, larger crank pulley damper, hydraulic mounts, and slightly more restrictive intake and exhaust systems—the better to further cut down noise/vibration/harshness. Even so, it still makes 210 horsepower at 6000 rpm and 193 pound-feet of torque at 4800 rpm. Matched with a smooth-shifting electronically controlled four-speed automatic, which ships power to the rear wheels via a viscous-coupled limited-slip differential, it gives the J30 impressively brisk acceleration.

In Japan, where the J30 is sold as the Leopard J. Ferie, buyers can opt for a 4.1-liter V-8 (basically a downsized 4.5-liter Q-engine). Rumor has it we might see this powerplant—and the traction control system that comes with it—turn up here later on, possibly under the hood of a two-door J30 variant that will replace the current M30.

All our driving was confined to Nissan's Tochigi proving ground in early prototypes. But even a steady rain couldn't dampen our initial enthusiasm about the J30. The car combines a compliant ride with excellent balance, responsiveness, and high-speed stability. Expected to roll into dealerships later this spring with a sticker somewhere in the low to mid-$30,000 range, the J30 should compete well against its primary rivals, the Acura Legend, BMW 525i, Lexus ES 300, and Mazda 929. As always, we'll reserve final judgement until slipping behind the wheel of a true production model. But it's clear a good deal of effort went into making this middle brother of Infiniti's sedan range far more than just another pretty face. **MT**



TECH DATA

Infiniti J30

GENERAL/POWERTRAIN

Body style	4-door, 5-passenger
Vehicle configuration	Front engine, rear drive
Engine configuration	V 6, DOHC, 4 valves/cylinder
Engine displacement, ci/cc	182/2960
Horsepower, hp @ rpm, SAE net	210 @ 6000
Torque, lb-ft @ rpm, SAE net	193 @ 4800
Transmission	4-speed auto.
Axle ratio	3.92:1

DIMENSIONS

Wheelbase, in./mm	108.7/2761
Length, in./mm	191.3/4859
Curb weight, lb	3525
Fuel capacity, gal	19.0
Fuel economy, EPA city/hwy., mpg	18/23

CHASSIS

Suspension, f/r	Independent/independent
Steering	Recirculating ball, power assist
Brakes, f/r	Vented discs/vented discs, ABS
Wheels	15 x 6.5, cast alloy
Tires	215/60VR15

PRICE

Base price	$33,000 (est.)
Price as tested	$33,000 (est.)

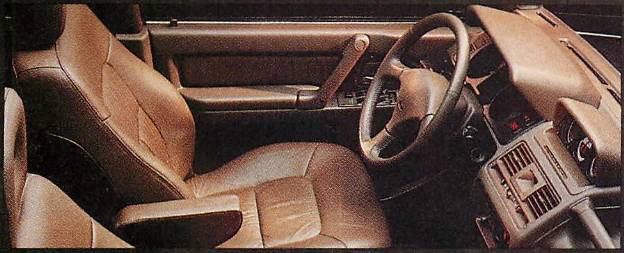
With the J30, Infiniti aimed to blend both traditional and contemporary elements into one integrated form. Under the hood sits a 210-horsepower version of the twin-cam 3-liter V-6 engine found in the normally aspirated Nissan 300ZX.

* Multi-Mode ABS™ optional for Montero SR and standard on Montero LS.

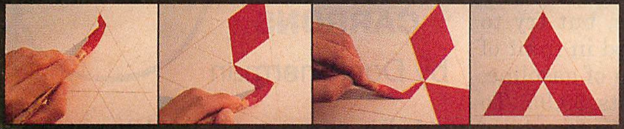
Introducing the 1992 Montero. A luxury car whose luxuries include state-of-the-art four-wheel drive.

The 1992 Montero is a luxury car that offers one very unusual luxury–the ability to choose your route without worrying about weather or obstacles along the way.

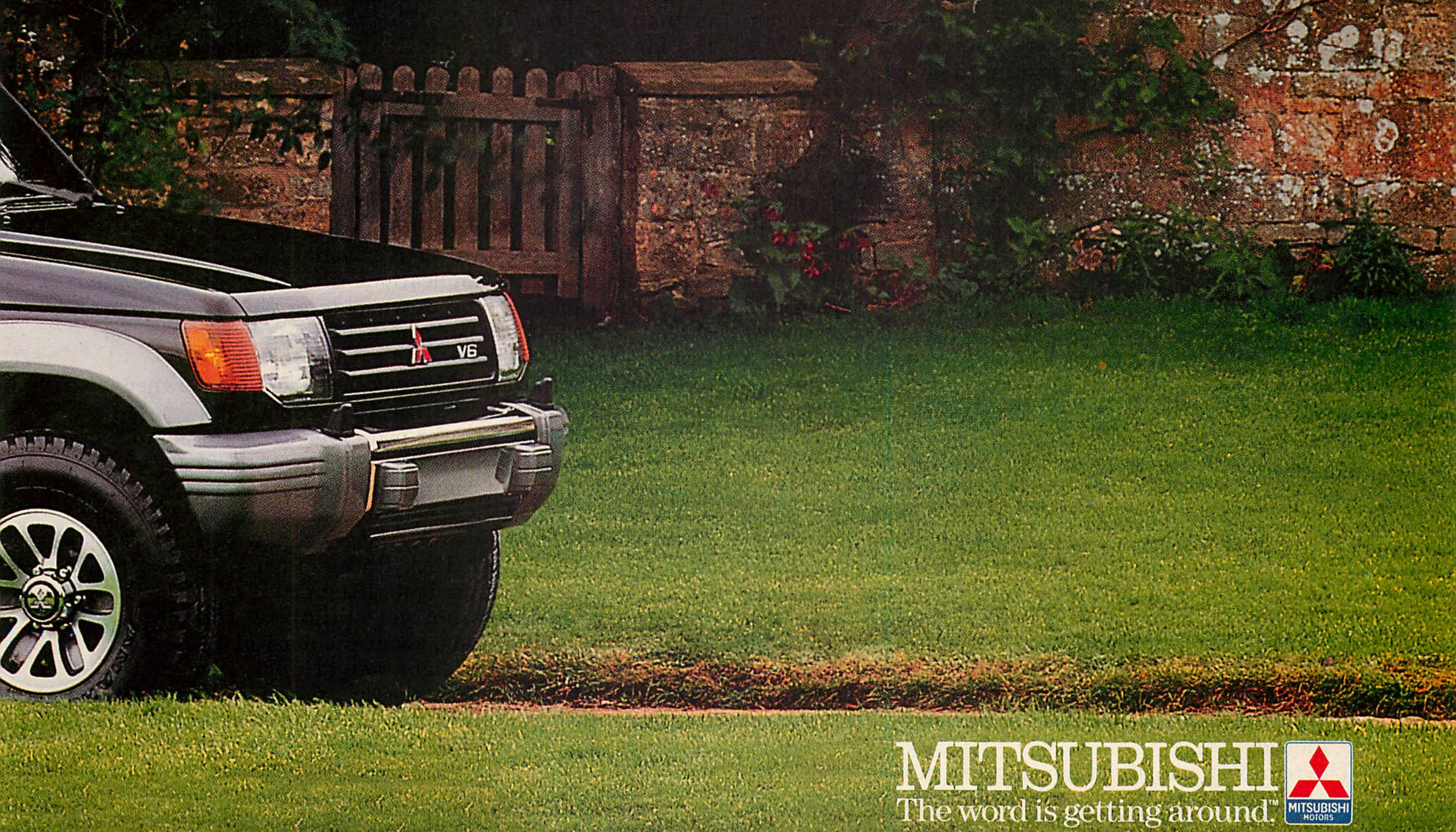
The reason is Active Trac 4WD.™ A new shift-on-the-fly system that can be optimized for any driving condition. From light rain to rocky stream beds. With Multi-Mode ABS™ brakes that automatically adapt to whichever drive mode you select.*



The Montero also offers ample space. Supreme comfort. High quality standards. And a generous range of luxury options including leather seating. Pushbutton ride control. CD stereo. Exactly what you'd expect from a luxury car built by Mitsubishi. For more information or a test drive, call 1-800-447-4700.



The name Mitsubishi means three diamonds, and has signified automotive excellence for 75 years.



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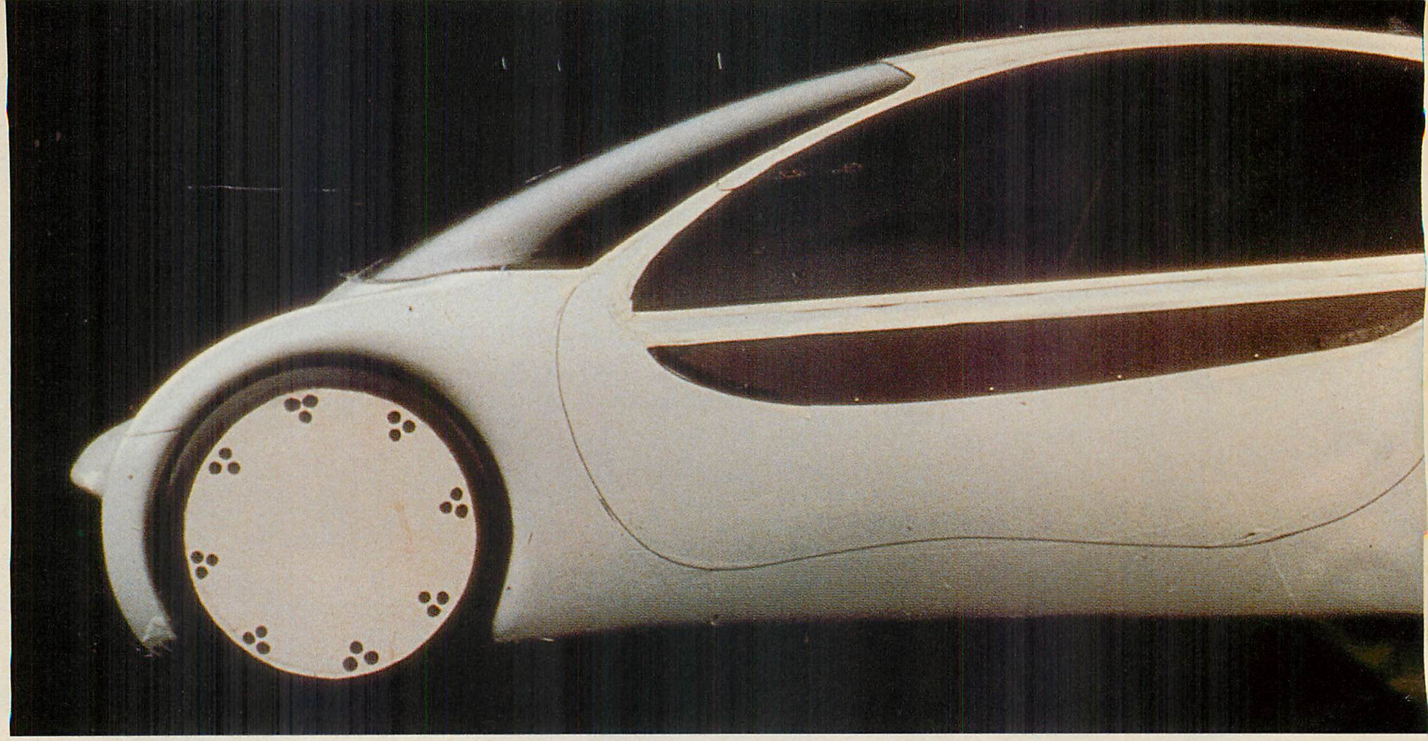


GM

USING CARBON FIBERS TO CONSERVE HYDROCARBONS

by Don Sherman

Like death and taxes, the future is a sure thing. Most of us will get there some day, so reservations aren't necessary. But what exactly will tomorrow be like? Even Mr. Spock can't answer that.

GM intends to explore some of the vast unknown with the concept car on these pages, dubbed Ultralite. It's weird looking in 1992 terms, but try to think ahead. Imagine this buggy parked in front of an injection-molded bungalow. A gallon of gasoline, if you can find the golden nectar, costs $9.95. To protect what's left of the environment, automobiles of the 20th century have either been recycled or consigned to museums.

Greater efficiency is the goal; Ultralite's mission is to transport a family of four comfortably, while consuming much less energy than today's automobile does. To keep this exercise realistic, three assumptions are made. One is that humans will be about the same size in the future, so the Ultralite's interior room is comparable to today's Chevy Corsica. And even though alternative forms of energy will play a role in the next century, many cars will still be gasoline-powered. So is the Ultralite.

The third goal is for this car to be a real, albeit experimental, automobile that can be driven and tested. In other words, this isn't just a crowd-wower, it's also a legitimate engineering exercise that's intended to prove (or disprove) advanced concepts for future application.

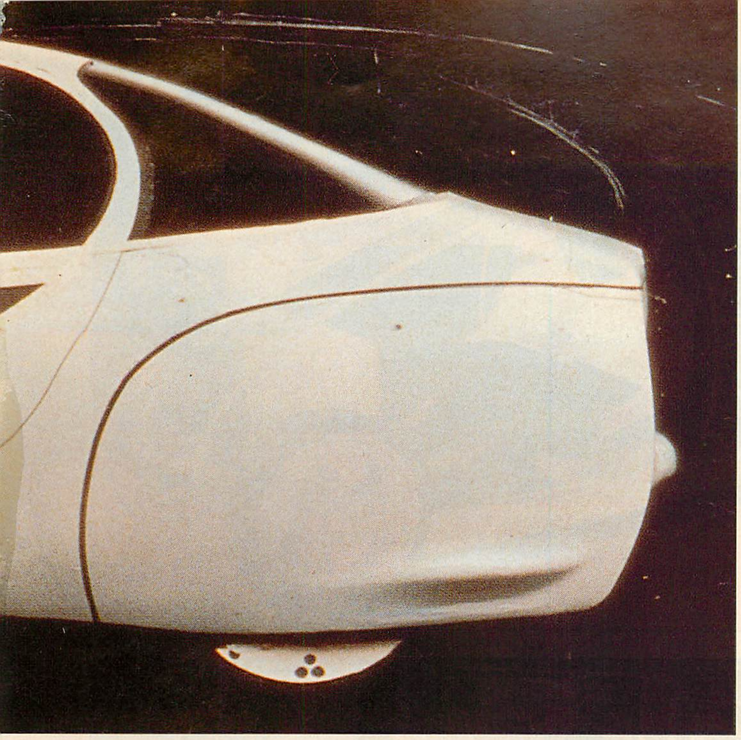
The GM strategists who sat down last April to brainstorm the Ultralite quickly agreed on a simple doctrine: half the weight and twice the fuel economy of any car available today. With those goals in mind, they reached out for advancements in every quadrant: powertrain, materials, design, and aerodynamics. In some cases, the stretch was surprisingly short to get Ultralite on the road quickly.

In other realms—such as the carbon-fiber composite construction of the unified body and chassis—the reach is far, indeed.

The teardrop, one of mother nature's purest forms, provided inspiration for the Ultralite's shape. The body is blunt in front, swollen in the middle, and gently tapered toward the back. External dimensions are slightly smaller than a Toyota Tercel's. The wheels are pushed out to the far corners of the envelope to maximize passenger space. (Ultralite's 110-inch wheelbase is just a tick shorter than a Buick Park Avenue's.) Access to the interior is provided by one large, roof-hinged door per side. All powertrain components are packed away in a separate pod at the rear.

Carbon fiber is the building material of choice because of its well-known strength-to-weight and stiffness-to-weight advantages over conventional materials demonstrated in countless applications ranging from aerospace to tennis rackets. The down side of the exotic black thread is cost: At $10 per pound, carbon fiber isn't a practical alternative to sheet steel at 25¢ per pound.

Scaled Composites, a Mojave, California, firm owned by Burt Rutan, constructed the Ultralite's one-piece hull, door structures, and power-pod cover using the following bill of materials: carbon-fiber cloth, carbon-fiber roving (essentially a rope of continuous strands), foam core, and epoxy resin. Scaled Composites' most noteworthy past accomplishment is the design and construction of the Voyager aircraft in which Dick Rutan (Burt's brother) and Jeana Yeager circumnavigated the earth in 1986. Even though the design is not yet optimized, the Ultralite weighs only 1400 pounds, about the mass of a Chevy Corsica. Furthermore, the light weight, high strength, and excellent stiffness characteristics of composite construction permitted the use of two huge gullwing doors, each of which provides unimpeded access to half of the interior.



ULTRALITE

Inside, there's plenty of room for four living, breathing adults. An elbow-high tunnel runs full length for structural stiffness and to house a 5.0-gallon fuel tank and a heating/ventilating/air-conditioning system. Head-up instrumentation shows critical driving parameters—such as speed and fuel consumption—within the driver's field of vision.

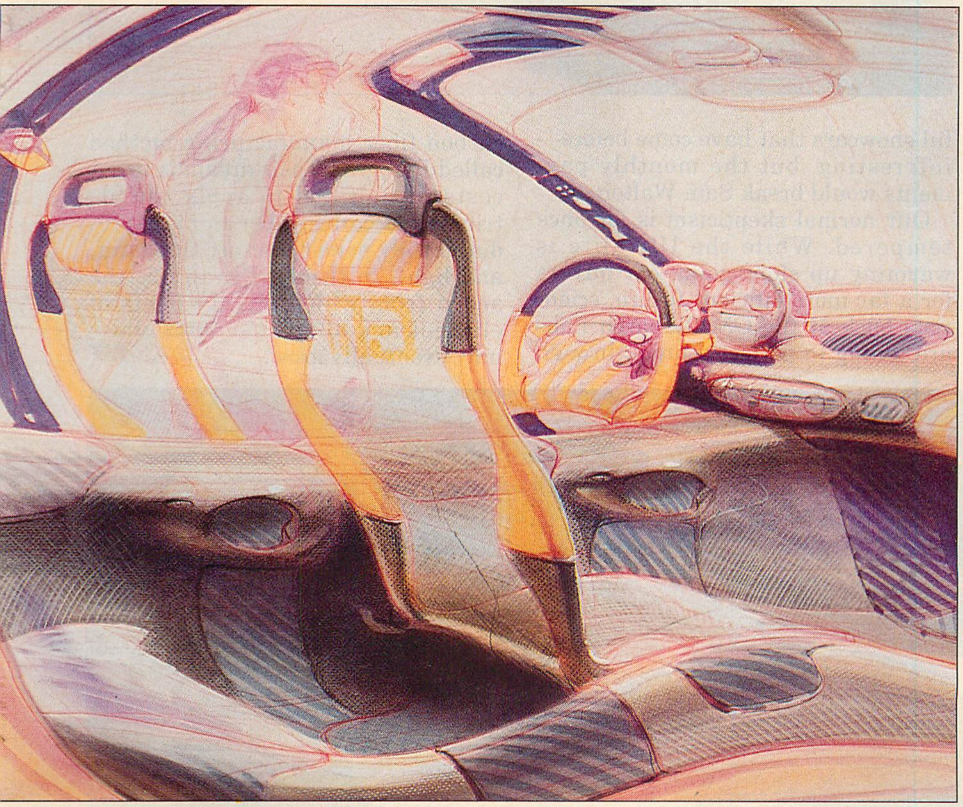
The bucket seats look like lawn furniture from space: Simple hinged tubular frames support a special Duoflex material invented in the General Motors Research Labs. This lightweight synthetic feels like screen-door mesh, but it's sufficiently strong and stretchy to support an adult in reasonable comfort. For crash protection, there are three-point belts attached to each seat frame and also one airbag per passenger. Inflatable restraints for rear occupants are mounted to the front seatbacks.

There's no cargo hold, so storage space is provided at two interior locations: ahead of the floating instrument panel on the passenger's side of the car and on a shelf behind the rear seat. When the Ultralite family packs for vacation in the 21st century, they'll use carbon-fiber suitcases molded to fit the space available. An elastic retention net prevents unintended flying objects.

In the interests of low aerodynamic drag, the Ultralite's bottom is smooth and flat except for two molded-in NACA ducts, which encourage airflow to the rear engine compartment. So far, only one-third scale models have been tested in the wind tunnel. The result is an encouraging drag coefficient of 0.192 (minus one outside mirror and at a low ride height, which will be used at cruising speed).

Except for computer-controlled air springs supplied by Gates Rubber, the Ultralite's suspension is a conventional independent, unequal-length control-arm layout (front and rear). The front wheels are steered by a rack-and-pinion gear without power assistance. A conventional ABS-equipped four-wheel disc brake system is remarkable only in the use of special lightweight silicon-carbide-reinforced aluminum rotors. Goodyear low-rolling-resistance tires, size 175/65R18, are mounted to forged aluminum wheels. In lieu of a bulky spare, this car has self-sealing tires.

The Ultralite's powertrain is an interesting mix of today and tomorrow. Instead of reinventing the automatic transmission, a four-speed automatic was simply requisitioned from Saturn parts bins; it's light in weight, computer controlled, and well suited to the application. The engine is, according to Advanced Engineering



The Ultralite's floating instrument cluster is supplemented by a head-up display. Tubular bucket seat frames are upholstered with a special Duoflex material developed by the GM research labs.

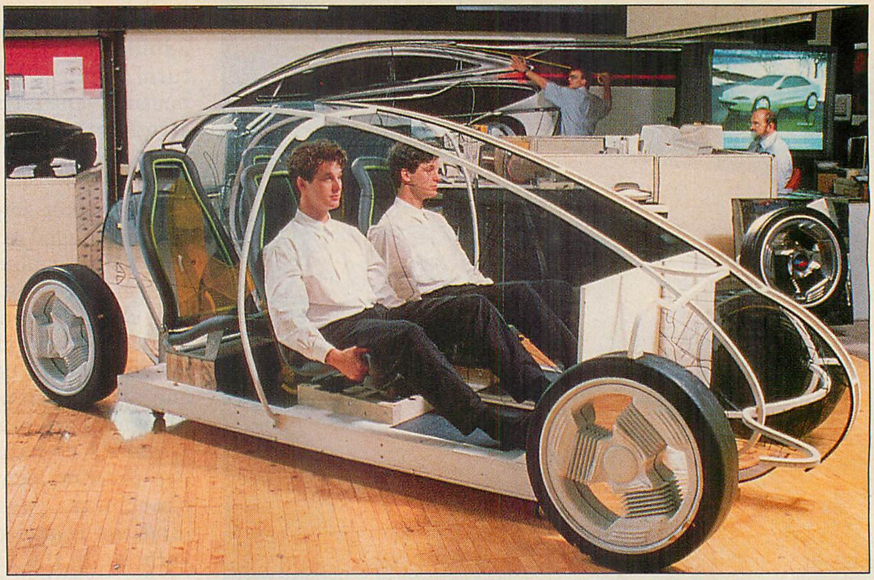
Staff experts, the most efficient powerplant currently available at GM: the CDS2 three-cylinder two-stroke, which made its debut at the '90 North American International (Detroit) Auto Show. This Computer-controlled Direct-injection Stratified-charge two-stroke displaces 1.5 liters, weighs but 173 pounds, and delivers 111 horsepower at 5000 rpm. It's positioned transversely in the car, in line with the automatic transmission, between the Ultralite's rear seat and rear-axle centerline. All powertrain-related components and the rear suspension mount to a steel-tube space frame that bolts to the body structure at six mounting points on the rear surface of the composite-plastic hull.

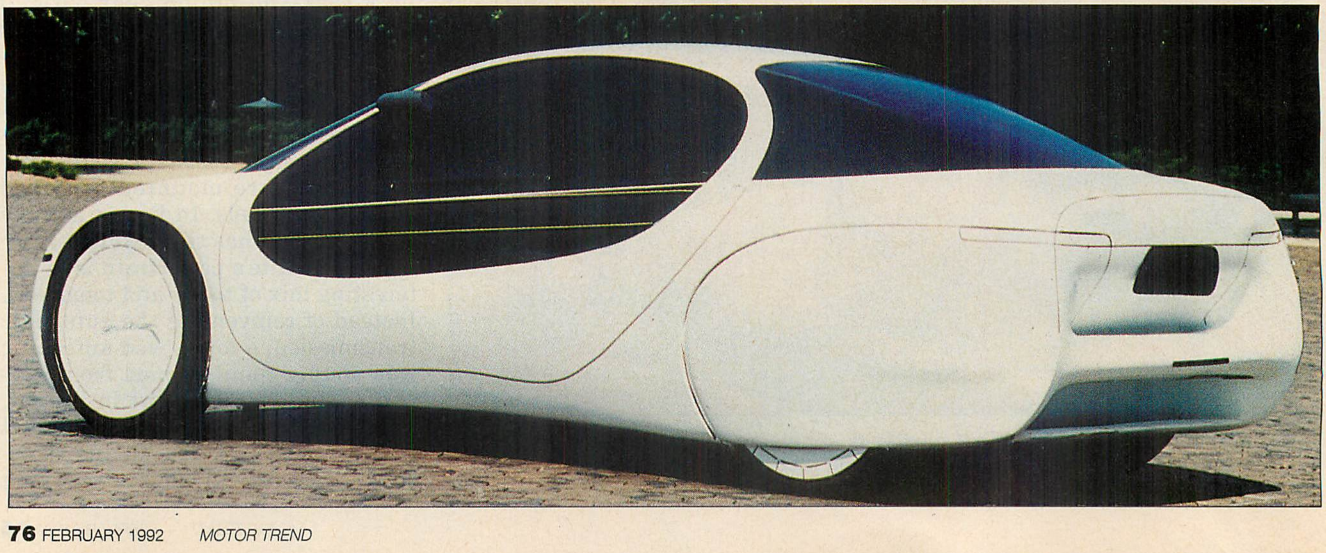
Though the finished car hasn't turned a wheel as of this writing, the prospects are good. According to wind-tunnel measurements, the aerodynamic drag at 55 mph is only 4.1 horsepower (versus about 15 horsepower for a conventional automobile). The magic 100-mpg fuel-economy bogey is met at a steady speed of 50 mph. At 55 mph, the Ultralite purrs 96 miles down the road for every gallon of fuel consumed.

GM engineers studiously avoided the old-fashioned tradeoff of acceleration for fuel economy. As a result, the Ultralite isn't only a potential mileage champion, it also has an appetite for speed. According to calculations, the available horsepower will accelerate this futuremobile to 60 mph in 7.8 seconds. Its theoretical top speed is a heady 135 mph.

This remarkable performance depends largely on the use of carbon fiber, a building material that's perfect for space shots, but currently a bit too pricey for mass-produced automobiles. With that in mind, it's tempting to categorize the Ultralite with all the other weird and wonderful showcars that have come before—interesting, but the monthly payments would break Sam Walton.

Our normal skepticism is for once tempered. While the Ultralite is warming up show-going car buyers for a far more efficient future, scientists back at the GM Research Labs are toiling to perfect a breakthrough carbon-fiber manufacturing method called Pyrograf. Their dream is to cut costs in half and to apply the attributes of carbon fiber to mass-produced body panels that are thin, stiff, and light. In theory, Ultralite is the acorn from which mighty fleets of efficient and affordable automobiles may eventually grow. MT





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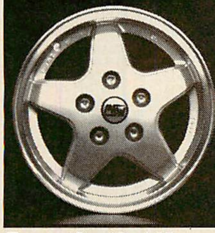
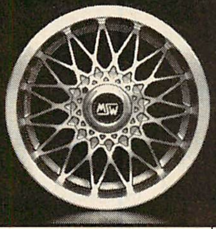


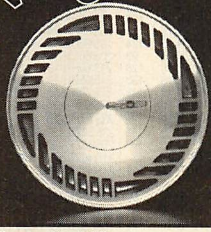
Type 19 13, 14"

Fits: Honda, Hyundai, Mitsubishi, VW.
Finish: Silver accents with machined face and lip or silver painted center with machined lip.



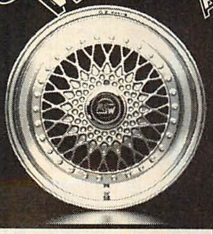
Type 21 14, 15"

Fits: Audi, BMW, Ford, Mazda, Volvo, VW.
Finish: Black, gold or silver with machined face and lip.



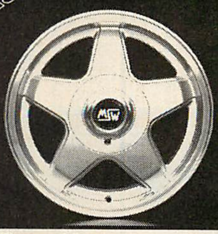
Type 6 14"

Fits: GM (5x100).
Finish: Black accents with machined face.



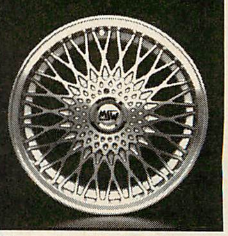
Type 8 15, 16, 17" 3 pc.

Fits: BMW, Corvette '72 to '82, Jaguar, RX7 '86 on, Mercedes.
Finish: Black or gold center with polished outer lip.



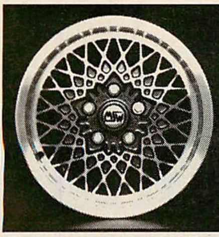
Type 20 14, 15, 16"

Fits: Audi, BMW, Ford, Infiniti, Mitsubishi, Mercedes, Nissan, Toyota.
Finish: Silver accents with machined face and lip. Or black, silver painted center with machined lip.



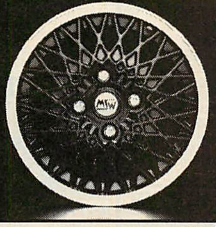
Type 7 15, 16"

Fits: Mercedes, Porsche 911, 944 to '86.
Finish: Anthracite or gold accents with machined face and lip.



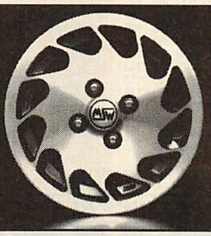
Type 1 13, 14, 15"

Fits: BMW, Mazda, Mercedes.
Finish: Black or gold center with machined lip or anthracite or black accents with machined face and lip.



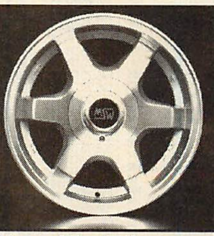
Type 2 13, 14, 15"

Fits: Audi, Ford, GM, Honda, Mazda, Mitsubishi, Nissan, Toyota, Volvo, VW.
Finish: Anthracite, black or gold painted center with machined lip.



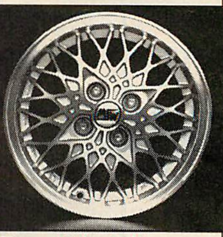
Type 25 13"

Fits: Mazda, Toyota.
Finish: Silver accents with machined face.



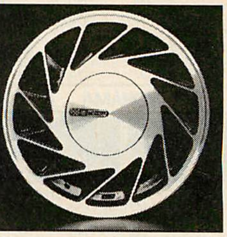
Type 6S 15"

Fits: BMW, Ford.
Finish: Silver accents with machined face and lip.



Type 2N 14"

Fits: Audi, BMW, Eagle, Honda, Mazda, Mitsubishi, Plymouth, Toyota, Volvo, VW.
Finish: Black, gold or silver accents with machined face and lip.



Type 5 14"

Fits: Ford, GM, Mazda.
Finish: Black accents with machined face.

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CAR	WHEEL	TIRE	PKG. PRICE
BMW 3 series '84 - '91	MSW Type 2N Alloy Machined Black Finish	175/70-14 Pirelli Winter S2	548
BMW 5, 6, 7 pre '88	BBS RA Alloy Gold or Black	200/60-390 Mich. TRX M/S	760
Honda Accord '90+	MSW Type 2 Alloy Black Finish	185/65-15 Pirelli Winter S2	516
Volvo 700 series	MSW Type 2N Alloy Machined Black Finish	185/65-15 Pirelli Winter S2	612

DUNLOP

Qualifier M + S
H - Rated

195/50HR-15	$88		
225/60HR-16	110	245/50HR-16	159

Qualifier M + S
T - Rated

185/60TR-14	$59		
195/60TR-14	62		
205/60TR-14	67		
215/60TR-14	65	215/60TR-15	71
195/60TR-15	66	215/65TR-15	76
205/60TR-15	68	225/60TR-15	73

Max Trak•Grip M + S
Q - Rated

175/70QR-13	$39		
185/70QR-13	42		
175/70QR-14	43	195/70QR-14	47
185/70QR-14	44	205/70QR-14	49

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Winter S2

145/ R-13	$37
175/70R-13	46
165/65R-14	44
175/70R-14	48
185/70R-14	56
185/ R-14	50
185/65R-15	64
195/65R-15	78

PIRELLI Original Equipment on the World's Finest

Winter 210P

- Directional tread pattern for excellent traction in fresh snow
- Extremely good wet-road behavior
- A true winter performance tire

195/55R-15	90	235/50R-16	142

PIRELLI Original Equipment on the World's Finest

Winter 190/190P

- 190P has directional tread pattern for improved traction
- High resistance to aquaplaning due to grooves and siping
- Handling characteristics similar to a summer tire

185/60R-14*	$71	205/55R-15	83
195/60R-14*	80	205/55R-16	99
195/65R-14*	70	225/50R-16	135
195/70R-14	52		
185/65R-15*	72		
185/70R-15	60		

*190P similar in tread to Winter 210P

Continental

TS740

145R-13	$29
155R-13	38
175R-14	49
205/55R-15	75

MICHELIN

XM + S 250

175/65QR-14	$43

TRX M&S

220/55HR-390	$106
200/60HR-390	105

SEMPERIT

Top Grip

185/70R-14	$49
195/65R-14	48

Direction Grip

205/55R-15	77

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All-Season AVS A+4

185/60VR-14	$72
195/60VR-14	81
195/60VR-15	86
205/60VR-15	96
215/60VR-15	107
235/60VR-15	108
205/55VR-16	167
225/50VR-16	171
255/50VR-16	179

AVS INTERMEDIATE

185/60VR-13	$70
205/60VR-13	85
185/60VR-14	78
195/60VR-14	88
195/65VR-14	85
205/60VR-14	98
225/60VR-14	104
185/65VR-15	87
195/50ZR-15	118
195/55ZR-15	130
195/60VR-15	93
195/65VR-15	90
205/50ZR-15	140
205/60VR-15	106
205/65VR-15	103

All-Season AVS U+4

185/60HR-14	$59
195/60HR-14	67
215/60HR-14	77
225/60HR-14	79
195/60HR-15	71
205/65HR-15	75
215/60HR-15	84
215/65HR-15	79
235/60HR-15	91

AVS INTERMEDIATE continued

215/60VR-15	$115
225/50ZR-15	158
225/60VR-15	120
235/60VR-15	125
255/45ZR-15	194
285/40ZR-15	202
345/35ZR-15	232
195/50ZR-16	132
205/50ZR-16	156
205/55ZR-16	173
225/45ZR-16	174
225/50ZR-16	177
225/55ZR-16	201
245/45ZR-16	189
245/50ZR-16	176
255/50ZR-16	185
215/45ZR-17	178
235/45ZR-17	191
255/40ZR-17	191
275/40ZR-17	222
315/35ZR-17	296

A022

205/50ZR-15	$160
205/55VR-15	135
225/50ZR-16	201
225/55VR-16	217

A403

195/50VR-15	$90
205/50VR-15	117
225/50VR-15	122
205/55VR-16	133
225/50VR-16	136
245/45VR-16	156
245/50VR-16	135
255/50VR-16	144

A509

185/60HR-13	$50
205/60HR-13	62
185/60HR-14	57
195/60HR-14	64
205/60HR-14	72
225/60HR-14	76
195/50VR-15	89
195/60HR-15	68
205/50VR-15	106
205/60HR-15	74
205/65HR-15	72
205/65VR-15	80
215/60HR-15	81
215/65VR-15	84
225/50VR-15	120
225/60VR-15	93
205/55VR-16	131
225/50VR-16	134

YOKOHAMA YOKOHAMA

A008G

165/70HR-10	$47
175/70HR-12	56
205/55ZR-14	132
195/50ZR-15	123
205/50ZR-15	146
205/55ZR-15	162
215/55ZR-15	177
225/50ZR-15	165
285/40ZR-15	211
205/55ZR-16	180
225/45ZR-16	182
225/50ZR-16	184
245/45ZR-16	197
245/50ZR-16	183
255/50ZR-16	193
215/45ZR-17	186
235/45ZR-17	199
255/40ZR-17	213

A008R TU (RACE)

215/60HR-15	$81
225/60HR-15	80
205/55ZR-16	115
225/50ZR-16	119

A008P(Porsche)

195/65ZR-15	$101
215/60ZR-15	129
205/55ZR-16	193
225/50ZR-16	196
245/45ZR-16	211
205/50ZR-17	199
255/40ZR-17	228

A 378

185/60HR-14	$51
195/60HR-14	58
215/60HR-14	65
195/60HR-15	60
205/60HR-15	66
205/65HR-15	64
215/60HR-15	71
215/65HR-15	67
235/60HR-15	73
215/60HR-16	77
225/60HR-16	80

A008RS (RACE)

185/60HR-13	$72
185/70HR-13	72
205/60HR-13	76
185/60HR-14	72
195/60HR-14	80
205/60HR-14	90
215/60HR-14	94
225/60HR-14	98
195/50ZR-15	98
195/60HR-15	96
205/50ZR-15	104
205/60HR-15	94
215/60HR-15	97
225/50ZR-15	113
225/60HR-15	104
205/55ZR-16	106
225/50ZR-16	113
245/45ZR-16	117
255/50ZR-16	117

A008R (RACE)

225/60HR-15	$79
205/55VR-16	115

PIRELLI

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PZERO

205/50ZR-15	$187
225/50ZR-15	212
345/35ZR-15	342
205/55ZR-16	220
225/45ZR-16	225
225/50ZR-16	233
245/45ZR-16	255
205/50ZR-17	230
225/45ZR-17	268
235/45ZR-17	269
245/40ZR-17	285
245/45ZR-17	272
255/40ZR-17	286
265/40ZR-17	290
275/40ZR-17	325
315/35ZR-17	372
335/35ZR-17	431
235/40ZR-18	425
245/40ZR-18	432
255/35ZR-18	470
255/45ZR-18	384
265/35ZR-18	475
275/35ZR-18	496
295/35ZR-18	511
295/40ZR-18	461
315/30ZR-18	526
255/40ZR-19	538
295/35ZR-19	555

P700Z

195/50ZR-15	$149
205/50ZR-15	158
215/50VR-15	187
225/50ZR-15	169
205/45ZR-16	196
205/50ZR-16	192
205/55VR-16	119
205/55ZR-16	169
225/45ZR-16	192
225/50ZR-16	192
235/50ZR-16	298
245/45ZR-16	209
245/50ZR-16	229
205/40ZR-17	229
205/50ZR-17	214
215/40ZR-17	235
215/45ZR-17	244
215/50ZR-17	232
235/40ZR-17	249
235/45ZR-17	249
245/35ZR-17	262
245/45ZR-17	255
255/40ZR-17	244
255/45ZR-17	257
265/40ZR-17	244

P700

195/50ZR-16	$155
205/50ZR-16	198
255/50VR-16	214
215/45ZR-17	221

P7, 7F &7R

175/50VR-13F	$83
195/50VR-15	114
225/50VR-15	174
225/50VR-15R	175
345/35VR-15R	273
205/55VR-16	175
225/45VR-16	186
225/50VR-16	188
245/45VR-16	205
255/50VR-16	216

P2000

165/65TR-13	$36
185/55TR-14	42
185/65TR-15	73

P4000

195/65VR-15	$151
205/55VR-15	113
225/65ZR-15	157

P8

185/65TR-15	$68

P600

185/60HR-14	$76
185/65HR-14	85
195/55HR-14	109
195/60HR-14	93
195/60VR-14	115
195/65HR-14	93
205/55HR-14	107
205/55VR-14	109
205/60HR-14	86
205/60VR-14	91
185/55VR-15	109
195/50HR-15	102
195/50VR-15	119
195/55VR-15	122
195/60HR-15	106
195/60VR-15	125
195/65HR-15	103
195/65VR-15	131
195/65ZR-15	151
205/55HR-15	121
205/55VR-15	125
205/60HR-15	113
205/60VR-15	127
205/65HR-15	107
205/65VR-15	139
215/60HR-15	124
215/60ZR-15	146
215/65ZR-15	149
225/60VR-15	151
225/60ZR-15	155
235/60VR-15	171
205/55VR-16	130
225/55ZR-16	145
225/60ZR-16	158
225/60ZR-16	166

P66

185/70HR-14	$102

P6

175/70HR-13	$55
185/60HR-13	63
185/70HR-13	57
205/60HR-13	79
175/70HR-14	61
185/60HR-14	63
185/70HR-14	60
195/60HR-14	74
195/60VR-14	102
195/65HR-14	89
195/65VR-14	100
195/70HR-14	64
195/70VR-14	88
205/70HR-14	84
205/70VR-14	95
225/60VR-14	123
185/65HR-15	79
185/70VR-15	92
195/60HR-15	77
195/65HR-15	88
195/65VR-15	96
205/55ZR-15	118
205/60HR-15	78
205/60VR-15	104
205/65VR-15	105
215/60HR-15	101
215/60VR-15	114
215/60ZR-15	121
215/65VR-15	114

P77

175/70HR-13	$60
185/70HR-13	63
205/70HR-13	67
205/70HR-13*	64
185/70HR-14	65
185/75HR-14*	65
195/70HR-14	69
195/70HR-14*	63
195/75HR-14*	68
205/70HR-14	69
205/70HR-14*	76
205/75HR-15*	74
205/75HR-15	78
215/75HR-15*	76
225/70HR-15	87
225/70HR-15*	85

P500

175/70HR-13	$52
185/70HR-13	54
185/60HR-14	63
185/70HR-14	56
195/60HR-14	68
195/70HR-14	62
205/70HR-14	68
215/60HR-14	74
195/60HR-15	73
195/65HR-15	76
205/60HR-15	79
215/60HR-15	84
215/65HR-15	82
225/60HR-15	72

P5

175/70HR-13	$65
185/70HR-13	69
175/70HR-14	85
185/70HR-14	89
195/70HR-14	110
205/70VR-15	135
215/70VR-15	139
225/65VR-15	152

P300 (NEW)

155/80SR-13	$39
165/80SR-13	41
175/70TR-13	47
175/80SR-13	44
175/80SR-13*	45
185/70TR-13	52
185/80SR-13	49
185/80SR-13*	50
185/70TR-14	55
185/70TR-14*	57
185/75TR-14*	58
195/70TR-14	58
195/70TR-14*	60
195/75TR-14*	60
205/70TR-14	63
205/70TR-14*	65
205/75TR-14*	65
205/70TR-15*	68
205/75TR-15*	68
215/70TR-15*	71
215/75TR-15*	71
225/75TR-15*	77
235/75SR-15*	81

*White Line

P3

145 SR-10	$27
155 SR-15	42
165 SR-15	46

P4

145 SR-12	$32
155 SR-12	28
145 SR-13	34
155 SR-13	35
155/70 SR-13	36
165 SR-13	39
165/70 SR-13	41
175 SR-13	43
175/70 SR-13	45
175/80 SR-13*	44
185/70 TR-13	49
185/80 SR-13	46
185/80 SR-13*	50
165/ TR-14	43
175 SR-14	33
185 SR-14	46
185/70S R-14	53
185/75S R-14*	60
195/70 SR-14	56
195/75 SR-14*	64
205/70 SR-14	61
205/75 SR-15*	73
215/70SR-15*	70
215/75 SR-15*	75
225/70 SR-15*	78

*White Letter

SCORPION

345/60VR-17	$1,239

MICHELIN

XGTV / Z

195/60VR-14	$100
205/50VR-15	122
205/60VR-15	123
215/60VR-15	124
215/65VR-15	99
225/60VR-15	128
205/55VR-16	153
225/50VR-16	149
245/45VR-16	192
245/50VR-16	166
255/50VR-16	187
245/45ZR-17	219

XGT4

155/70TR-13	$49
175/70 R-13	55
185/70 R-14	56
205/70 R-15	61
215/70 R-15	65
225/60 R-16	88

XGT V4 & Z4

205/60VR-15	$128
215/60VR-15	129
225/60VR-15	133
225/50VR-16	173
225/55ZR-16	249
225/60VR-16	138
245/50VR-16	184
255/50VR-16	194

TRX

165/70HR-365	$85
185/65HR-365	90
200/60HR-365	106
180/65HR-390	100
190/65HR-390	110
200/60VR-390	143
220/55HR-390	113
220/55VR-390	146
240/55VR-390	164
240/45ZR-415	171
240/55VR-415	168
280/45VR-415	177

MXT4

175/70HR-14	$69
185/70HR-14	95

XGT H4

185/60HR-14	$92
195/60HR-14	97
215/60HR-14	109
195/60HR-15	104
205/60HR-15	111
215/60HR-15	114
215/65HR-15	104
225/70HR-15	113
225/60HR-16	124

XGT PLUS

235/50ZR-16	$202
255/45ZR-16	139
315/40ZR-16	253
245/40ZR-17	197
275/40ZR-17	245
315/35ZR-17	260

MXL

165/70TR-13	$54
175/70TR-13	60
185/70TR-13	66
175/70TR-14	66
185/65TR-14	71
185/70TR-14	71
195/70TR-14	76
205/70TR-14	79
205/70TR-14R	83
175/70TR-15	70
185/65TR-15	73
195/65TR-15	82

MXV2

185/60HR-14	$94
185/65HR-14	97
195/60HR-14	99
195/60VR-14	109
185/55VR-15	114
185/65HR-15	103
195/50VR-15	123
195/55VR-15	119
195/65HR-15	114
195/65VR-15	127
205/60HR-15	134
205/60VR-15	113
205/55VR-16	141

MXV4

205/65VR-15	$134

MXV

175/70HR-13	$76
185/70HR-13	84
205/60HR-13	97
185/60HR-14	94
185/65HR-14	97
185/70HR-14	91
195/60HR-14	99
195/60HR-14**	99
195/60VR-14	109
195/65HR-14	105
195/65VR-14	117
195/70HR-14	96
205/55VR-14	119
205/60HR-14	107
205/60VR-14	119
205/70HR-14	102
185/65HR-15	103
185/65VR-15	115
195/55VR-15	119
195/60HR-15**	107
195/60HR-15**	96
195/60VR-15**	118
195/65HR-15	114
195/65VR-15	127
205/55VR-15	128
205/60HR-15	06
205/60VR-15	125
205/60VR-15**	107
205/65HR-15	115
205/65VR-15	134

** MXV3

MXX

205/50ZR-15	$220
205/45ZR-16	244
205/50ZR-16	234
205/55ZR-16	227
225/45ZR-16	262
225/50ZR-16	215
245/45ZR-16	281
235/45ZR-17	280
255/40ZR-17	306
265/40ZR-17	313

Continental

CH/CV /CZ51

175/70HR-13	$59
185/60HR-13	72
185/70HR-13	62
205/60HR-13	82
175/70HR-14	72
185/60HR-14	69
185/65HR-14	78
185/70H R-14	66
195/60H R-14	76
195/65HR-14	78
195/70HR-14	69
205/70HR-14	73
185/60VR-14	95
185/65VR-14	97
195/60VR-14	107
195/65VR-14	104
195/70VR-14	98
205/60VR-14	107
205/70VR-14	102
185/65HR-15	71
195/60HR-15	82
195/65HR-15	76
205/60HR-15	97
205/65HR-15	90
185/55VR-15	114
185/65VR-15	100
195/50VR-15	113
195/55VR-15	120
195/60VR-15	114
195/65VR-15	94
205/50VR-15	137
205/55VR-15	113
205/60VR-15	120
205/65VR-15	105
215/65VR-15	116
225/60VR-15	115

CZ 91

215/50ZR-15	$149
205/55ZR-16	150
225/50ZR-16	156

CS/CT21

145 SR-12	$33
155 SR-12	34
145 SR-13	34
155 TR-13	36
165 TR-13	40
175 TR-13	45
175/70 TR-13*	46
185/70 TR-13	52
185 R-14	54
185 CR-14	63
185 SR-14	53
165 TR-14	46
175 TR-14	48
175/70 TR-14	50
185/70 TR-14	56
165 TR-15	44
195/70 TR-14	59
185/65 TR-15	62
165 SR-15	48

BFGOODRICH

Comp T/A VR & ZR

195/60VR-14	$85
195/50VR-15	94
205/50VR-15	102
205/55VR-15	94
215/60VR-15	99
225/50VR-15	109
225/60VR-15	103
205/55ZR-16	89

Continued

BFGoodrich T/A BFGoodrich T/A BFGoodrich T/A

CompT/A HR4 &VR4 All Season

185/70HR-13	$76
205/60HR-13*	83
206/60HR-13	79
185/60HR-14	81
185/70HR-14*	81
195/60HR-14	85
195/70HR-14	85
205/70HR-14	89
215/60HR-14*	97
215/60HR-14	93
225/60HR-14	95
235/60HR-14*	104
185/65HR-15	84
195/65HR-15	89
195/60HR-15	88
205/60HR-15	90
215/65HR-15*	100
215/60HR-15	95
215/65HR-15	95
225/60HR-15	98
225/60VR-15	118
235/60HR-15*	107
255/60HR-15*	114
205/55VR-16	143
225/50VR-16	153
225/60VR-16	123
245/45VR-16	169
245/50VR-16	153
255/50VR-16	163

*White Letter

225/50ZR-16	123
245/45ZR-16	116
245/50ZR-16	141
255/50ZR-16	143

DUNLOP OUTPERFORMS DUNLOP OUTPERFORMS DUNLOP OUTPERFORMS

D40 M2

195/55VR-14	$110
195/50ZR-15	103
195/60VR-15	119
195/65VR-15	112
205/50ZR-15	139
205/55ZR-15	118
205/60VR-15	122
205/65VR-15	109
215/60ZR-15	123
225/50ZR-15	158
225/60ZR-15	123
235/60VR-15	123
245/50ZR-15	165
205/55ZR-16	139
225/50ZR-16	159
225/55ZR-16	179
225/60VR-16	134
245/45ZR-16	166
245/50ZR-16	166
245/55ZR-16	190
255/50ZR-16	177
215/45ZR-17	161
235/45ZR-17	191
245/40ZR-17	167
245/45ZR-17	199
255/40ZR-17	189

D60 A2

185/60HR-14	$52
195/60HR-14	55
195/70HR-14	57
185/65HR-15	60
195/60HR-15	56
195/65HR-15	64
205/60HR-15	59
205/65HR-15	68
215/60HR-15	62
205/55HR-16	98
215/60HR-16	88
225/60HR-16	91

HR4 All Season

175/70HR-13	$46
185/70HR-13	49
185/70HR-14	52

D40 M2,cont.

275/40ZR-17	209
315/35ZR-17	243

D80 V4

195/60VR-15	$111
195/65VR-15	108
205/60VR-15	115
205/65HR-15	65
205/65VR-15	117
215/60VR-15	119
215/65VR-15	120
225/60VR-15	129

D60 M2

185/60HR-14	$61
185/65HR-14	70
195/60HR-14	70
195/65HR-14	74
205/60HR-14	75
195/60HR-15	72
195/65HR-15	75
205/60HR-15	69
205/65HR-15	80
215/60HR-15	79

245/40ZR-18	369
275/35ZR-18	403
255/40ZR-19	420

BRIDGESTONE

RE71 POTENZA

195/60HR-14	$71
195-60VR-14	116
205/60HR-14	102
205/60VR-14	117
225/60VR-14	130
195/50ZR-15	113
195/60VR-15	114
195/65ZR-15	128
205/50ZR-15	139
205/60VR-15	119
215/60VR-15	121
225/50ZR-15	149
225/60VR-15	139
235/60VR-15	141
245/50ZR-15	174
205/55ZR-16	161
225/50ZR-16	168
245/45ZR-16	186
245/50ZR-16	188
255/50ZR-16	213
215/50ZR-17	194
235/45ZR-17	204
245/40ZR-17	209
255/40ZR-17	218
255/45ZR-17	212
275/40ZR-17	270
315/35ZR-17	326
335/35ZR-17	340

HP41 POTENZA

175/70HR-13	$39
185/70HR-13	43
185/70HR-13*	51
205/60HR-13*	58
185/60HR-14	67
185/70HR-14	61
195/60HR-14	70
195/60HR-14*	74
195/70HR-14	48
195/70HR-14*	57
205/70HR-14	51
205/70HR-14*	61
215/60HR-14*	80
215/70HR-14*	63
225/60HR-14*	83
235/60HR-14*	87
185/65HR-15	70
195/60HR-15	71
195/65HR-15	73
205/60HR-15	75
215/60HR-15	80
215/65HR-15	81
215/65HR-15*	85
225/60HR-15*	89
225/70HR-15*	69
235/60HR-15*	90
235/70HR-15*	72
255/60HR-15*	95

* White Letter

TURANZA

185/60HR-14	$69
185/70HR-14	63
195/60HR-14	73
195/65HR-14	75
195/65VR-14	115
195/70HR-14	66
205/70HR-14	70
215/70HR-14	73
185/65HR-15	72
195/60HR-15	74
195/65HR-15	76
195/65VR-15	116
205/60HR-15	77
205/60VR-15	118
205/65HR-15	80
205/65VR-15	122
215/60HR-15	183
215/65HR-15	184
215/70VR-15	113
225/60VR-15	134
225/60VR-16	142

EXPEDIA

195/55VR-15	$154
205/55VR-13	184
205/50ZR-13	244
255/40ZR-17	289
225/45ZR-17	260

Original Equipment Tires YOKOHAMA

AX321

195/70 VR-14	$75
205/70 VR-14	80
185/70 VR-15	76
205/70 VR-15	84
215/70 VR-15	89

AX323

185/60 HR-14	$71
P195/60 R-14	80
195/60 HR-14	80
195/60 HR-15	84

AX340

205/60 HR-15	$97

A341

195/60 HR-15	$87
P195/60HR-15	86
P195/65HR-15	82

A344

195/65 HR-14	$78
195/65 HR-15	82
205/65 HR-15	91
205/65 VR-15	101

A404

205/60HR-14	$83

A406

185/60 HR-14	$71
195/60 HR-14	80
205/60 VR-14	99

Y221

185/60 HR-14	$59

Y350

P145/80 R-13	34
145 SR-13	34
155 SR-13	37
165 SR-13	39

Y351

175/70 SR-13	$44

Y352

175/70HR-13	$47
185/60HR-13	56
185/70HR-13	51
215/50HR-13	74
235/50HR-13	79
185/60HR-14	63
185/70HR-14	55
195/70HR-14	59
205/70HR-14	63

Y352 continued

235/60HR-14	80
245/50HR-14	91
245/60HR-14	84
205/60VR-15	91
245/60HR-15	88
255/60HR-15	90
275/60HR-15	93
295/50HR-15	120
255/50VR-15	140

Y360

P195/75R-14	$46
P205/75R-14	50
P205/75 R-14*	48

*White Letter

Y361

165/70 SR-12	$40

Y362

145 SR-12	$31

Y370

235/75 R-15	$59

Y372

145 SR-12	$32
165/70 SR-12	41
155 SR-13	36
155/80 SR-13	36
175/70 SR-13	44
175/70 HR-14	48
185/65 SR-14	59
185/70 SR-14	50
185/75SR-14	40
185/70HR-14	57
205/70SR-14	57

Y376

165/65HR-14	$78
175/65HR-14	66
185/60 HR-14	71
195/60 HR-14	80
195/65HR-15	82
205/60HR-15	92
205/65VR-15	175

Y380

175/70 SR-13	$48

Y382

155 SR-13	$35
175/70 SR-13	42
P175/70 R-13	42
185/70 R-13	45

Y382 continued

185/70 SR-13	45
185/70 R-14	48
185/70 SR-14	48
195/70 SR-14	51
P195/70 R-14	51

call for more sizes

Y383

165/80 R-13	$38

Y384

165 SR-13	$38
185/70 SR-13	46
185/70 SR-14	48

Y387

165 SR-13	$38

Y388

195/65 HR-15	$81
215/65 HR-15	100

Y811

215/75 R-15	$60
225/75 R-15	66
225/75 R-15*	76
235/75 R-15	73
235/75 R-15*	91

*White Letter

Y814

P235/75SR-15	$83

Y826

215/75 R-14	$81
215/75 R-14*	70

*White Letter

Y828

225/75 R-15	$80

Y858

185 SR-14	$45
195/75 R-14	48
P195/75R-14*	55

*White Letter

UNIROYAL

Rallye340

175/70HR-14	$80
185/60HR-14	78
195/60VR-14	103
195/65HR-15	99
195/65VR-15	119
225/60VR-15	149

Rallye 440

225/50ZR-16	$279

TIRE SPECIALS

185/60HR-13	Pirelli P6	$59
185/60HR-14	GY Eagle GT	49
185/60HR-14	Michelin EPX+	62
185/60HR-14	Uniroyal 340	75
185/70HR-14	Michelin LX1	61
185/70SR-14	Michelin EPX	70
195/65HR-14	Uniroyal 340	99
195/70 R-14	Michelin XA4	59
175/70 -15	Michelin XM&S 100	59
195/50HR-15	General XP200	69
195/50VR-15	Fulda Y2000	77
195/50ZR-15	Bridgestone RE71	113
195/50ZR-15	GY Eagle ZR-50	105
205/60HR-15	Bridgestone RE71	73
205/60HR-15	Michelin EPX+	69
205/65HR-15	GY GT+4	91
205/65VR-15	GY Invicta GA	89
205/65VR-15	Uniroyal 340	123
205/70 R-15	Firestone FR480	61
205/55VR-16	Pirelli P700Z	119
225/50ZR-16	GY Eagle ZR-50	159
225/50ZR-16	Bridgestone RE71	179
225/55ZR-16	Pirelli P600	145
225/60ZR-16	Uniroyal 340	149
235/50ZR-16	Uniroyal 440	249

FALKEN

FXG

195/50HR-15	$73
205/50HR-15	85
195/50VR-15	83
205/50VR-15	96
225/50VR-15	117
205/50VR-16	107
205/55VR-16	115
225/50VR-16	119
225/50ZR-16	132
245/50ZR-16	134
255/50ZR-16	140
215/45ZR-17	167
235/45ZR-17	178
255/40ZR-17	152
275/40ZR-17	224

FXU All Season

175/70HR-13	$67
185/60HR-13	45
185/70HR-13	42
205/60HR-13	43
185/60HR-14	47
185/70HR-14	44
195/60HR-14	50
195/70HR-14	47
205/60HR-14	53
205/70HR-14	52
225/60HR-14	59
195/60HR-15	53
205/60HR-15	56
215/60HR-15	62
205/60VR-15	72
225/60VR-16	80

GOODYEAR

GS-C NEW!!

205/50ZR-15	$157
225/50ZR-15	176
205/55ZR-16	167
225/50ZR-16	182
245/45ZR-16	205
245/50ZR-16	193
255/50ZR-16	199
275/40ZR-17	254
315/35ZR-17	307

GS-D

205/45ZR-16	$189
205/55ZR-16	167
225/50ZR-16	182
225/50ZR-16	159
225/55ZR-16	167

*Imported

GA

185/70TR-13	$73
185/70TR-14	77
195/60HR-14	198
195/70SR-14	81
205/60TR-14	86
205/70HR-14	102
215/60TR-14	89
195/60HR-15	103
195/60VR-15	110
195/65HR-15	103
205/60HR-15	109
205/60SR-15	91
205/60TR-15	91
205/65VR-15	115
205/70TR-15	90
215/60VR-15	116
215/65SR-15	92
215/65TR-15	92
215/70VR-15	105
225/70TR-15	94
205/55SR-16	102
215/60SR-16	95
225/60HR-16	117
225/60SR-16	97
235/55SR-16	99

Eagle (VR,ZR)

205/60VR-13	$113
205/60VR-14	99
215/60VR-14	99
235/60VR-14	99
195/60VR-15	119
205/50VR-15	146
205/60VR-15	125
215/60VR-15	126
225/50VR-15	164
225/60VR-15	116
245/50VR-15	174
245/60VR-15	138
255/60VR-15	143
265/50VR-15	185
205/55VR-16	149
225/50ZR-16	159
225/55VR-16	167
225/55ZR-16	180
225/60VR-16	134
225/60ZR-16	141
245/45ZR-16	155
245/50VR-16	165
245/50ZR-16	166
255/50VR-16	171
255/50ZR-16	181
245/40ZR-17	199
245/45ZR-17	218
275/40ZR-17	239
285/35ZR-17	220
315/35ZR-17	275

Eagle (VR,ZR) German Made

205/50VR-15	$146
215/50VR-15	171
195/50ZR-16	139
205/50ZR-16	155
205/55ZR-16	167
225/50VR-16 *	164
225/45ZR-16	159
225/50ZR-16	182
225/55ZR-16	180
245/45ZR-16	199
245/50ZR-16	193
245/55ZR-16	191
255/50ZR-16	199
215/50ZR-17	159
235/45ZR-17	162
255/45ZR-17	228
265/40ZR-17	209

GT+4

185/70TR-13*	$84
195/70 R-14*	93
195/70 R-14	88
195/60HR-14	105
205/70HR-14	109
215/70HR-14	112
225/60HR-14*	108
185/60TR-14	85
185/70TR-14	88
195/60TR-14*	94
205/60TR-14*	99
205/70TR-14*	98
235/60TR-14*	108
215/60UR-14	97
215/60UR-14*	102
215/60 R-15	100
215/65 R-15*	105
185/60HR-15	90
195/60HR-15	110
205/60HR-15	116
205/65HR-15	95
215/70HR-15	116
225/50HR-15	137
225/60HR-15	105
225/70HR-15	119
225/70HR-15**	123
205/60TR-15	99
205/60TR-15*	104
205/70TR-15	98
225/70TR-15*	107
245/60TR-15*	115
255/60TR-15*	119
195/70UR-15	93
215/65UR-15	100
215/65UR-15**	105
215/65VR-15	118
235/70VR-15	130
235/70VR-15**	134
205/55HR-16	125
225/55HR-16	140
245/50HR-16	150
225/60TR-16	111
205/55UR-16	111
215/60UR-16	103
225/60UR-16	109
205/55VR-16	129

NCT

175/70HR-14	$90
185/60HR-14	79
185/60HR-14*	96
185/70HR-14	79
195/60HR-14	95
195/60VR-14*	107
195/60VR-14	107
195/65HR-14	95
195/65VR-14	107
185/65HR-15*	101
185/65HR-15	101
195/50VR-15	85
195/60VR-15	113
195/65HR-15*	107
195/65VR-15	113
195/65VR-15*	90
205/60VR-15	119
225/60VR-15*	127
235/60VR-15	131
235/60ZR-15	138
235/70HR-15	131
235/70VR-15	126

*NCT2

Call for prices and sizes on the NEW AquaTred

GT+4 cont.

215/60VR-16	128
225/50VR-16	128
225/60VR-16	124
255/50VR-16	155
225/60ZR-16	132

*White Letter
**White Line

Original Equipment Tires BRIDGESTONE

108V

145/80 R-12	$38
155 SR-13	43
165 SR-13	51

113V

175/70SR-13*	$50
185/70SR-14**	63

*White Letter
**White Line

116V

185/70 R-13	$30
175/70SR-13	55
205/70SR-14	68

207V

185/70HR-13	$58
185/70HR-13*	58

*White Letter

212V

P195/75R-14	$61
P195/75R-14*	62
P205/75R-14*	67

*White Letter

RE-85

185/60HR-14	$87
175/65 R-14	89

137V/(RE86)

185/70HR-13	$68
185/60HR-14	86
195/60 R-14	73
205/60HR-14	95
195/60HR-15	91
205/60 R-15	96
215/60 R-15	103

RE-87

195/60HR-14	$90
205/60VR-14	143

RE-88

185/60HR-14	$87
195/60HR-14	91
195/65HR-14	94
195/60HR-15	92
205/60HR-15	92
205/60VR-15	145
205/65 R-15	99
205/65VR-15	153

RE95

225/50 VR-16	$201

RE93

205/50 VR-15	$166
215/50 VR-15	174

S408

155 SR-13	$42
155/70SR-13	41
175/70SR-13	49
175/70 R-14	57
185/70 R-14	58

S134

P145/80 R-13	$42

S371

185/70 HR-14	$58

S381

155 SR-13	$43

G03/G04

P195/60 R-14	$92
P195/65 R-15	97
205/60 HR-15	99

401V

P145/80 R-12	$40
P165/70 R-12	48
P145/80 R-13	45
P155/80 R-13	45
P165/70 R-13	50
P175/70 R-13	54
185/70 SR-13*	69

S402

175/70 SR-13	$41
185/70 SR-13	46
185/70 R-13	46
185/65 SR-14	56
185/70 SR-14	49
P185/70 R-14	49
P185/75 R-14	50
195/70 R-14	52
195/70 SR-14	52
P195/75 R-14	50
205/75 R-14	57
P205/75 R-14*	66
P215/75 R-14	60
195/75 SR-15	54

*White Letter

S405

145 SR-12	$40
155 SR-13	45
155/80SR-13	45
165 SR-13	53
165/65SR-13	50
175/70SR-13	54
185/70HR-13	60
185/70SR-13	60
185/65SR-14	78
185/70SR-14	64
205/70SR-15	72
205/70SR-15*	83

*White Letter

RE-92

165/65 R-13	$58
175/60 R-14	82
175/65HR-14	89
185/60 HR-14	87
185/70 HR-14	76
185/60 VR-14	98
195/60 HR-15	92
205/55VR-15	139
205/60HR-15	97
205/65HR-15	99

S406

175/70HR-13	$65
185/70HR-13	72
185/60HR-14	94
185/70HR-14	77
195/60HR-14	98
195/65HR-14	101
195/70HR-14	81
205/60HR-14	103
205/70HR-14	86
225/70HR-14	110
215/65 R-15	113
185/65HR-15	97
195/60HR-15	100
195/65HR-15	102
205/60HR-15	104
P205/65R-15	107
215/60HR-15	111
205/65VR-15	121

*White Letter

RE-91

225/50VR-16	$206

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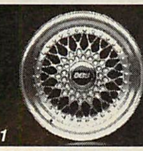
73

FITTI-MONO-14,15,16"
Fits: Acura, Audi, BMW, Chrysler(fwd), Ford, Honda, Infiniti, Isuzu, Lexus, Mazda, Nissan, Mercedes, Toyota, VW.
Finish: Polished face w/ clearcoat.
Sample Package: 14x6 wheel w/ 185/60HR-14 Yoko A509 **$804**


1

BBS RS 15,16,17" 3 pc.
Fits: Acura, Audi, BMW, Corvette, Ferrari,Honda,Isuzu,Jaguar, Lexus, NSX, Mazda,Mercedes,Mustang, Nissan,Porsche,Saab,Toyota,Volvo,VW.
Finish: Silver, gold, platinum center with polished outer rim.
Sample Package: 16x8 wheel w/ 225/55ZR-16 Pirelli P600 **$3,172**

7

MSW TYPE 6s 15"
Fits: BMW 3 ('84-'91), Ford Mustang, VW.
Finish: Polished face w/clearcoat .
Special Ford Mustang Package: 15x7 wheel w/225/60HR-15 Pirelli P500 **$644**

36

RONAL R-9 15,16"
Fits: Audi, BMW(5,6,7), Eagle, Ford, GM, Jaguar, Jeep, Mazda, Mercedes, Mitsu., Nissan, Porsche, Toyota, Vanagon.
Finish: Silver, black,or white.
Sample Package: 16x8 wheel w/ 225/50ZR-16 Dun D40M2 **$1,508**
SOME FITMENTS ON SALE

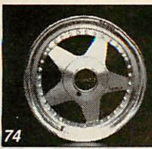
39

ACT SP 14,15 "
Fits: BMW, Ford, Honda, Mazda, Nissan, Toyota, VW.
Finish: Machined face with silver accents.
Sample Package: 15x7 wheel w/ 195/50VR-15 Yoko A509 **$988**

60

BORBET T-A 15,16,17,18"
Fits: Acura, Alfa, Audi, BMW, Ford, GM, Honda, Infiniti, Jaguar, Lexus, Mazda, Mercedes, Mitsubishi, Nissan, Porsche, Saab, Toyota, VW.
Finish: Silver center with polished lip.
Sample Package: 15x7 wheel w/ 195/50ZR-15 Dun D40M2 **$1,200**

Tire and Wheel Packages Prices include 4 tires &4 wheels, mounted and balanced. Call us for a package designed specifically for you. Packages shown are for price reference. Wheels available separately.


74

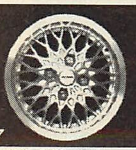
FITTISTAR -15,16,17" 3 pc.
Fits: BMW, Camaro, Corvette, Jaguar, Bi-Turbo, RX-7, Mercedes, Mustang, T-Bird, 300ZX/Turbo, Porsche, Supra, VW.
Finish: Polished face and lip w/ silver accents.
Sample Package: 16x7.5 wheel w/ 205/55ZR-16 Dun D40M2 **$2,328**

2

BBS RG 15,16"
Fits: Acura, BMW, Infiniti, Lexus, Mercedes.
Finish: Platinum or silver w/ polished lip.
Features: Forged one piece wheel.
Special Mercedes 190/300 ONLY (Except 24V): 16x7.5 w/ 205/55VR-16 Pirelli P700Z **$1,149**

9

MSW TYPE 5 14"
Fits: Special for GM FWD(5-100) Cavalier, Corsica, Grand Am, Skylark, Sunbird.
Finish: Polished face with black accents.
Special Ford Mustang Package: 15x7 wheel w/225/60HR-15 Pirelli P500 **$564**


37

RONAL R-16 14 "
Fits: Acura, BMW, Honda, Mazda, Nissan, Toyota, VW, Infiniti.
Finish: Silver or gold accents with diamond cut face and lip.
Sample Package:14x6 wheel w/ 185/70TR-14 Pirelli P300 **$708**

41

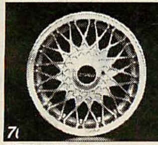
ACT LS 15,16"
Fits: Acura, Audi, BMW, Ford, GM(fwd), Honda, Infiniti, Lexus, Mazda, Mercedes, Maxima, Supra, Camry, VW and more.
Finish: Polished face w/ silver accent or custom paint..
Sample Package: 16x7.5 wheel w/ 225/55ZR-16 Pirelli P600 **$1,500**

61

BORBET T-B 14,15,16,17"
Fits: Audi, BMW, Honda Mercedes, Porsche, Saab, Toyota,Volvo, VW, Alfa.
Finish: Polished face and lip w/ black or silver accents.
Sample Package:15x6 wheel w/ 195/50VR-15 Yoko A509 **$800**

6

O.Z. PLUTON 14,15,16"
Fits: Acura, Alfa, Audi, BMW, Chrysler, Eagle, Ford, GM(5-100), Honda, Jaguar, Mazda, Mercedes, Mitsu., Nissan, Toyota, Volvo, VW.
Finish: Polished face and lip/ Silver accent.
Sample Package: 15x7 wheel w/ 205/55ZR-15 Dun D40M2 **$1,288**


70

FITTI-MESH 15"
Fits: BMW, Infiniti, Lexus, Nissan, VW.
Finish: Polished face w/ gold, silver or white accents.
Sample Package: 15x7 wheel w/ 205/65VR-15 GY Eagle GA **$1,188**

3

BBS RZ 14,15,16, 17"
Fits: Acura, BMW, Honda, Jaguar, Mazda, Mercedes, Nissan, Probe, T-Bird, Toyota, Volvo, VW.
Finish: Gold or, silver with polished lip.
Sample Package: 15x7 wheel w/ 205/55ZR-15 Dun D40M2 **$1,768**

11

MSW TYPE 2N 14"
Fits: Acura, BMW, Honda, Mazda, Toyota, VW and more.
Finish: Black or gold accents with diamond cut face and lip.
Sample Package: 14x6 wheel w/ 195/60HR-14 Dunlop D60A2 **$696**

38

RONAL R-8 13,14,15"
Fits: Audi, BMW(3), Honda, Toyota, VW.
Finish: Silver, antique silver, or custom paint (center cap optional).
Special Audi Coupe GT '84-'89, 4000CS '84-'88, '80, '90; 5000S Package: 15x6 wheel w/ 205/60HR-15 Dun D60A2 **$632**

42

CENTRA T-11 14, 15"
Fits: BMW 3, Honda, 929, Mercedes, MR2, Toyota PU, VW.
Finish: Silver or black w/ polished lip, or chrome.
Sample Package: 15x7 wheel w/ 195/50VR-15 Yoko A509 **$1,112**

62

REPLICA 15"
Fits: All Mercedes (except 86+SL).
Finish: Silver paint with clearcoat. Chrome finish available.
Sample Package: 15x7 wheel w/ 205/65HR-15 Yoko A378 **$836**

8

O.Z. JUPITER 14,15"
Fits: Acura, Audi, BMW, Chrysler, GM, Ford, Honda, Mazda, Mitsu., Nissan, Toyota, Volvo, VW.
Finish: Silver or gold.
Sample Package:14x6 wheel w/ 185/60HR-14 Pirelli P600 **$964**

77

FITTI-INDY 15"
Fits: Acura, Audi, BMW, Honda, Infiniti, Mazda, Nissan, Toyota, VW and more.
Finish: Silver center with polished lip.
Sample Package: 15x7 wheel w/ 195/50VR-15 Yoko A509 **$1,084**

4

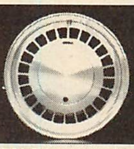
BBS RD 14,15"
Fits: Acura, BMW, Chrysler(fwd), Ford, GM, Honda, Mazda, Nissan, Saab, Toyota, VW.
Finish: Polished face w/ anthracite accents.
Sample Package:15x7 wheel w/ 195/50VR-15 Yoko A509 **$1,248**
CALL FOR SPECIALS

12

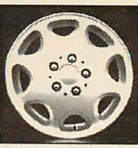
MSW TYPE 18 15"
Fits: BMW(3), VW.
Finish: Silver face with polished lip.
Sample Package: 15x7 wheel w/ 195/50VR-15 Yoko A509 **$900**

40

RONAL R-15 15"
Fits: Audi, BMW, Mustang, Thunderbird, Honda, Mazda, RX-7 (79-85), VW and many more.
Finish: Polished face with accents.
Sample Package: 15x7 wheel w/ 205/50VR-15 Yoko A509 **$1,188**
SOME FITMENTS ON SALE
CALL FOR INFORMATION


44

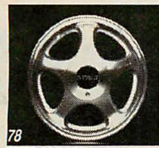
CENTRA T-31 14,15,16"
Fits: Mercedes
Finish: Polished face w/ gold star. Chrome finish available.
Sample Package: 15x7 wheel w/ 205/65HR-15 Yoko A378 **$1,000**
16x7 wheel w/225/55ZR-16 Pirelli P600 **$1,512**


100

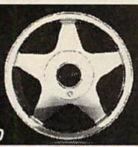
REPLICA II 15, 16"
Fits: All Mercedes except 86+ SL.
***Finish:** Silver paint with clear coat.*
Sample Package: 15x7 wheel w/ 205/65HR-15 Yoko A378 **$852**
16x7.5 wheel w/ 205/55ZR-16 Pirelli P700Z **$1,432**

30

ENKEI 79 13,14,15"
Fits: Many front & new generation rear drive cars (domestic & import).
Finish: Polished face with black accents.
Sample Package:15x6 wheel w/ 195/50VR-15 Yoko A509 **$872**


78

FITTI-500 15"
Fits: Acura, Audi, BMW(3) Mustang, Honda, Infiniti Q45, Maxima, VW.
Finish: Polished face w/ clearcoat
Sample Package: 15x7 wheel w/ 215/65HR-15 Yoko A378 **$1,008**


80

ELITE STAR 14,15,16"
Fits: Many cars and light trucks.
Finish: Polished face with black accents or chrome plated.
Sample Package: 15x7 wheel w/ 225/60VR-15 Yoko A509 **$852**

CHROME PLATING AVAILABLE AT ADDITIONAL COST

14

MSW TYPE 19 13, 14"
Fits: BMW(3), Honda(13"), Mazda, Mitsubishi, Toyota, VW.
Finish: Silver face with polished lip.
Sample Package: 13x5.5 wheel w/ 175/70TR-13 Pirelli P300 **$628**

102

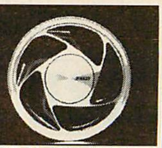
EURO'X II 16"
Fits: Acura Legend 91+, Infiniti Q45, Mitsubishi Diamante, Nissan 300ZX 90+, Toyota Supra.
Finish: Silver center with polished lip.
Sample Package: 16x8 wheel w/ 225/55ZR-16 Pirelli P600 **$1,852**

45

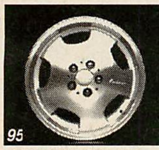
CENTRA T-10 14,15,16"
Fits: Audi,BMW, Honda, Mazda, Mercedes and VW.
Finish: Machined face with black accents.
Sample Package: 14x6 wheel w/ 185/60HR-14 Pirelli P600 **$784**

63

BORBET T-C 15,16,17,18"
Fits:Acura, Alfa, Audi, BMW, Ford, Honda, Infiniti, Lexus, Mazda, Mercedes, Mitsubishi, Nissan, Toyota, VW.
Finish: Silver paint with clearcoat.
Sample Package: 16x7.5 wheel w/ 205/50ZR-16 Pirelli P700Z **$1,644**


31

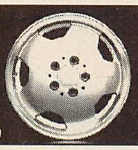
ENKEI 82 13,14,15,16 "
Fits: Many front & new generation rear drive cars (domestic & import).
Finish: Polished face with black or white accents.
Sample Package: 14x6 w/ 185/60HR-14 Dun D60M2 **$768**


95

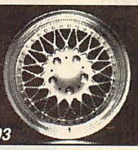
LORINSER RS90 17"
Fits: Mercedes 124, 129
Finish: Machined face and lip with silver accents. Chrome finish available.
Sample Package: 17x8 wheel w/ 215/45ZR-17 Dun D40M2 **$2,716**

81

ELITE FLORENSTAR 15,16"
Fits: Acura, Audi, BMW, GM, Chrysler(fwd),Honda, Infiniti, Lexus, Mazda, Mercedes, Nissan, Saab, Toyota, Volvo, VW.
Finish: Chrome plated .
Sample Package: 15x7 wheel w/ 195/50VR-15 Yoko A509 **$1,276**


20

AMG 15,16,17"
Fits: Mercedes.
Finish: Silver w/ polished lip or chrome.
Sample Package: 16x7.5 wheel w/ 225/45ZR-16 Pirelli P700Z **$2,368**
17x8 wheel w/ 235/45ZR-17 Pirelli P700Z **$2,716**


103

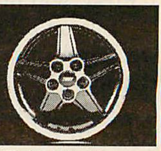
EURO'X III 16"
Fits: Acura Legend 91+, Lexus LS400/SC400 .
Finish: Silver center with polished lip.
Sample Package: 16x7 wheel w/ 205/55ZR-16 Pirelli P700Z **$1,816**

46

CENTRA T-21 15"
Fits: Acura, Honda, Miata, Toyota, VW.
Finish: Machined face with silver or black accents.
Sample Package: 15x7 wheel w/ 195/50VR-15 Yoko A509 **$988**

99

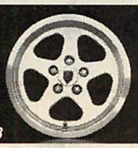
NJ-5 15, 16"
Fits: Acura, BMW, Honda, Nissan, Toyota, and VW.
Finish: Bright machined finish with clearcoat..
Sample Package: 16x7 wheel w/ 225/50ZR-16 Dun D40M2 **$1,808**


33

ENKEI 83 13,14,15"
Fits: Most front and new generation rear drive cars.
Finish: Black or white.
Sample Package: 15x6 wheel w/ 195/50VR-15 Yoko A509 **$872**

19

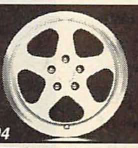
HRE 505 15,16"
Fits: Acura, Alfa, Audi, BMW, Ford, GM, Jaguar, Mazda, Mercedes, Maserati, Nissan, Porsche, Saab, Toyota, Volvo,VW.
Finsh: Polished face w/ gold, black or silver accent..
Sample Package: 15x7 wheel w/ 205/55ZR-15 Dun D40M2 **$2,028**


98

RUF 17"
Fits: 911, 930, 944, 951and 964.
Finish: Silver center w/ polished lip.
Sample Package: 17x8 & 17x9 wheels w/ 235/45ZR-17 & 255/40ZR-17 Dun D40M2 **$3,410**

23

ETOILE 16,17" 3pc.
Fits: Acura, Alfa, BMW, Chevrolet, Ferrari, Ford, Lamborghini, Mazda, Mercedes, 3000GT, 300ZX, Porsche, Toyota and more.
Finish: Polished face w/ gold acc.
Sample Package:17x9.5 wheel w/ 275/40ZR-17 Dun D40M2 **$3,208**


104

STERN 16, 17"
Fits: Acura Legend 91+, Infiniti Q45, Lexus LS400/SC400, Mercedes 190/300, Mitsubishi Diamante/Eclipse, Toyota MR2 91+/Supra .
Finish: Silver center w/ machined lip.
Sample Package: 16x7 wheel w/ 225/50ZR-16 GY GSC **$1,808**

105

MILANO 15, 16"
Fits: Acura Legend 91+, Lexus LS400/SC400, Mitsubishi Diamante/ Eclipse, Nissan 300ZX 90+ .
Finish: Machined face and lip with silver accents.
Sample Package: 16x7 wheel w/ 225/55ZR-16 Dun D40M2 **$1,364**

101

PORSCHE REPLICA 16"
Fits: Porsche 911 '78+, 944 '83-'86 Non-Turbo.
Finish: Black center with machined lip.
Sample Package:16x7 & 16x8 wheels w/ 205/55ZR-16 & 225/50ZR-16 Dun D40M2 **$1,538**

71

ENKEI 88 13,14,15"
Fits: Most front drive cars.
Finish: Gold, silver, or white spokes w/ polished lip.
Sample Package:15x6 wheel w/ 195/60HR-15 Dun D60M2 **$804**

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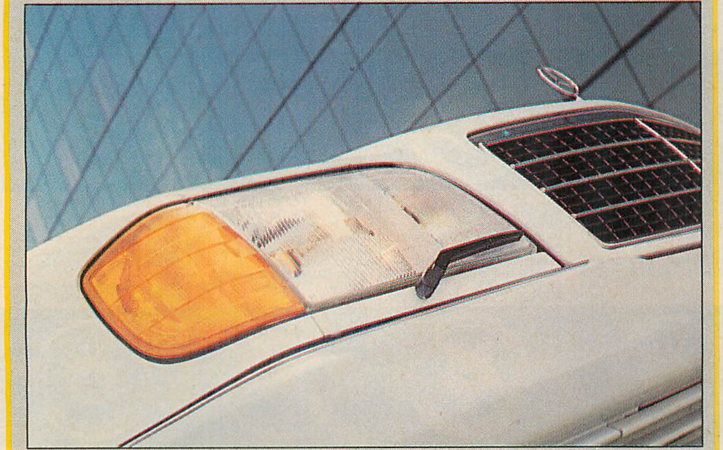


500SEL

MOTOR TREND

ROAD TEST

THE STUFF OF DREAMS

by Rik Paul

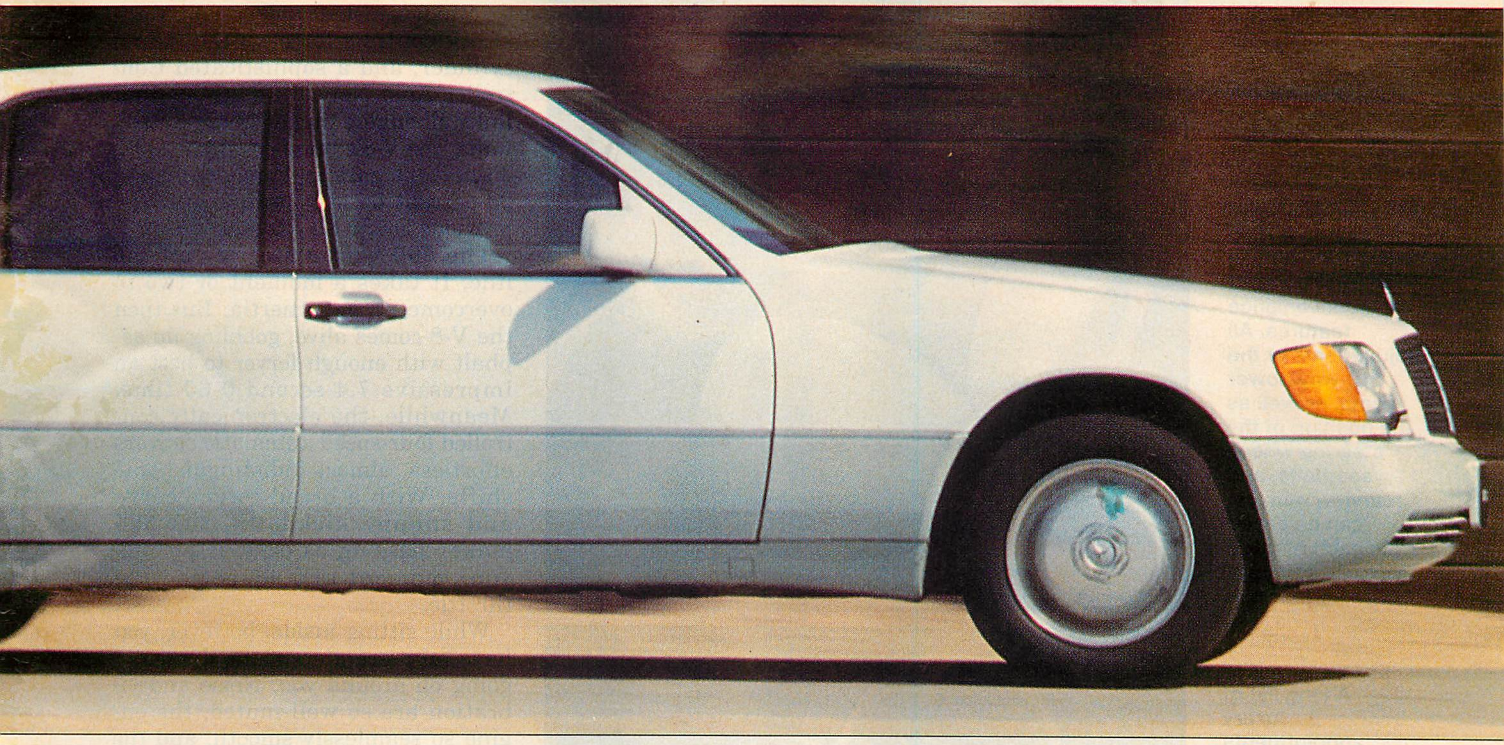
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JERRY GARNS

Imagine this. The doorbell rings. It's the mailman with a registered letter from the Publisher's Clearing House Sweepstakes. You are the winner of the $10 million grand prize. Just like that, your life is different. Suddenly, you're in a position to purchase cars that until now you've only been able to dream about.

First, you pick up that red XJ-S your better half has had her eye on all these years. Then maybe an NSX or ZR-1 for weekend romps. But for that number one car you'll use to commute, entertain, travel, and generally spend a large amount of your life in, you'd have to scour many a showroom to find a car more meticulously suited to that purpose than Mercedes' all-new 500SEL.

A senior member of M-B's prestigious S-Class lineup, the 500SEL sets a new standard for an intensely competitive market segment. After five and a half years of development, the 500SEL arguably qualifies as one of the two finest cars Mercedes has ever produced; the other being its V-12-powered sister, the 600SEL. As Dr. Wolfgang Peter, responsible for Mercedes passenger car development, put it, "Our aim was to create the greatest possible degree of technical and functional performance in all areas." In other words, nothing less than the ultimate luxury sedan.

The stakes were high on this project for two reasons. First, the previous S-Class was concluding a successful run of over 11 years and had set a strong precedent. Sec-



ond, and perhaps more important, Japan had thrown down the gauntlet in the luxury sedan class. Mercedes had to return with a strong statement of its own, about refinement, innovation, and performance. It had to reassure its true believers that the company was still at its pinnacle. The new S-Class is that statement.

The fact that the 500SEL carries a base suggested retail of $93,500 is simply a *byproduct* of producing a truly uncompromising luxury car.

The 500SEL is an imposing car. Its massive body sits on a lengthy 123.6-inch wheelbase. And it weighs a hefty 4740 pounds; 640 pounds more than the previous 560SEL. Most of this extra weight is a side effect of stronger, larger, or better reinforced components.

There's no denying *that on the road* the 500, with its gobs of unsprung weight, feels like a heavy, full-size car. Yet, its superbly tuned double-wishbone suspension upfront and multilink independent rear suspension work with the chassis to provide a silken highway ride quality and rocklike stability that uses the weight to its advantage. Bumps and road irregularities are absorbed, disseminated, and come into the passenger compartment as gentle ripples. Even at autobahn speeds of over 100 mph, the 500 feels as stable, smooth, and vibration-free as a 747 at 40,000 feet on a still day.

Although carving up a twisty, country road isn't this car's forte, the precise, well-defined steering control and inherent stability keep the big sedan reasonably well mannered in the tight stuff. Only after you've pushed it well beyond what any sensible Mercedes owner would care to drive, does the 500 respond with significant front-end push.

Our test car was also equipped with Mercedes' Automatic Slip Control traction control system. While a valuable aid in slippery conditions, the non-defeatable system effectively guts any attempts at sporty driving with lackluster engine response at the first sign of wheelspin.

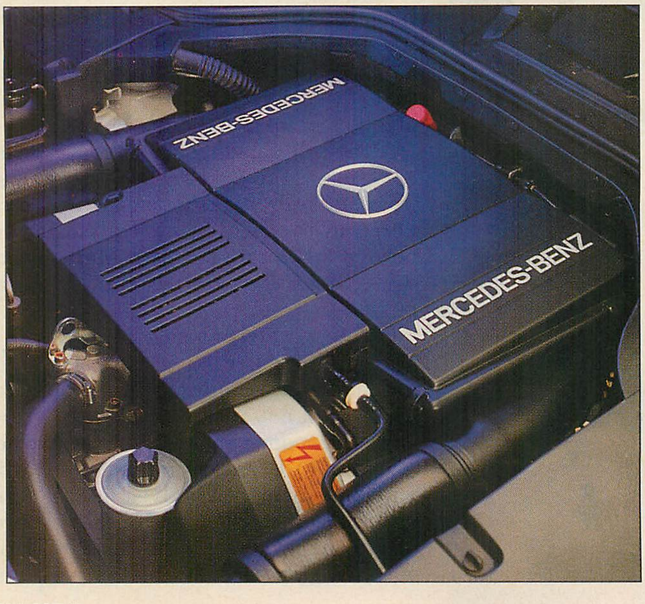
The 500SEL is propelled by a 5-liter aluminum V-8, with four cams, 32 valves, and a sobering output of 322 horsepower and 354 pound-feet of torque. Thanks to such improvements as a new Bosch LH fuel-injection system with a highly sensitive hot-wire air mass sensor, automat-

The 500SEL's *pampering interior* effectively insulates you from external noise and vibration, surrounding you with the plush ambiance of leather, burled wood trim, and an array of comfort and convenience features. All adjustments of the 12-way power seats, as well as the position of the steering wheel, seatbelts, and rearview mirrors, can be saved in each of three separate memory buttons.

A long list of luxury appointments includes driver and passenger airbags, dual automatic climate-control system with separately adjustable driver and passenger controls, premium Bose sound system, speed-dependent windshield wipers, one-touch power window operation, and insulating side glass.

Mercedes-Benz
MERCEDES-BENZ

The 5-liter 32-valve aluminum V-8 delivers silky-smooth performance coupled with a potent 322 horsepower and 354 pound-feet of torque. Incorporating Bosch LH fuel injection and an automatic electro-hydraulic intake cam adjuster mechanism, it delivers instant and purposeful response without calling undue attention to itself.



ic intake camshaft adjustment, antiknock controls for each individual cylinder, and a sophisticated Controller Area Network data bus that links all engine management control units, the V-8's numbers represent a 35-percent gain in horsepower and 23-percent boost in torque over the previous 560SEL's 5.6-liter V-8.

The 500 isn't a stormer off the line. It takes a moment or two to overcome its own inertia. But then the V-8 comes alive, gobbling up asphalt with enough fervor to post an impressive 7.4-second 0-60 time. Meanwhile, the electronically controlled four-speed automatic delivers effortless, almost indistinguishable shifts. With a broad torque curve and snappy kickdown, the 500 makes passing as easy as picking your moment and squeezing the throttle.

While sitting inside, however, you have no perception of the dynamics going on around you. Noise and vibration are so well-muted, the engine so seamlessly smooth, and the interior so comfortingly right, that you feel as if you're hurtling down the highway in a sumptuous cocoon. Inside, you settle into the well-bolstered, 12-way power adjustable seat, listen to the audiophile-quality Bose sound system, fine-tune the dual automatic climate control system (separately adjustable for driver and passenger), and feel the car respond to your every whim with power and authority.

All interior dimensions have been significantly increased: length by almost 4 inches, width by over 5 inches, and head room by nearly 2 inches.

As would be expected of a world-class luxury car, the 500SEL's interior doesn't skimp on appointments. While some cars boast of leather upholstery, heated front seats, infrared remote locking, ABS, driver and passenger airbags, and power everything, here, they're just the beginning.

For instance, three memory buttons allow individual settings of all power seat adjustments, tilt/telescopic steering wheel positioning, automatic seatbelt adjustment, and positioning of all three rearview mirrors. A power-assist system is available for use with all doors and the trunklid, which quietly closes and secures them without the need for slamming. Special thermopane-type side glass sandwiches a ⅛-inch layer of air between two plates of glass to prevent fogging and control temperature and sound insulation. A central locking system automatically closes the sunroof and any open windows when the doors are locked. One-touch power windows can detect an obstruction when being raised and automatically stop and withdraw. An active charcoal filter in the ventilation system removes air pollutants and reduces unseemly outside odors. The instrument cluster even includes a brake pad wear indicator and an exterior lamp failure warning lamp.

The 500SEL is also environmentally responsible. In addition to the S-Class being the first production cars to use the new CFC-free R134a refrigerant, they're free of asbestos and other common toxic materials, all plastics are recyclable and labeled for sorting, and petroleum solvents in the paint have been reduced significantly, transitioning to totally water-based paints in about two years.

So, what's the last word on the 500SEL? Mercedes has done its job well. The S-Class statement is strong and convincing. If your passion is to experience the most refined, innovative, and progressive V-8-powered luxury car on the road, and if you have the means to handle its over-$90,000 entry fee, the 500SEL delivers on the promise. If not, there are optional choices that offer much of the luxury value at less than half the cost. They may not be dream machines, but they're much closer to most people's reality. *MT*

SECOND OPINION

Why is it every time I'm asked to give an opinion on an expensive automobile, I end up saying that it's good but costs too much money. I promise not to say that about the S-Class Mercedes.

The 500SEL looks like what it is, a product of the '90s—obviously the result of many hours in the wind tunnel. With much of the same running gear as its predecessor, I didn't expect much difference in performance or handling. But as with sheetmetal, apparently there's been plenty going on with the platform, as well.

In every phase of track testing except the skidpad, where the traction control (which can't be defeated) kept performance down, the SEL excelled. Braking and acceleration were superb, but through the cones on the slalom course, the big sedan handled like a lightweight.

Inside, it's very much the primo luxo Eurosedan: plush, comfortable, and quiet. The 500SEL is a great car but expensive (that *is* different from what I've said before), and when the V-12 comes out next year, it'll be even better and a lot more expensive. Oh, to be rich.

—Michael Brockman

500SEL
MOTOR TREND

TECH DATA

Mercedes-Benz 500SEL

GENERAL

Make and model	Mercedes-Benz 500SEL
Importer	Mercedes-Benz of North America, Inc., Montvale, N.J.
Body style	4-door, 5-passenger
Drivetrain layout	Front engine, rear drive
Base price	$93,500
Price as tested	$98,050
Options included	CD changer, $1200
Ancillary charges	gas-guzzler tax, $3000; destination, $350
Typical market competition	BMW 750iL, Lexus LS 400, Infiniti Q45

DIMENSIONS

Wheelbase, in./mm	123.6/3140
Track, f/r, in./mm	63.1/62.0/1603/1576
Length, in./mm	205.2/5213
Width, in./mm	74.3/1886
Height, in./mm	58.9/1495
Ground clearance, in./mm	Not available
Manufacturer's curb weight, lb	4740
Weight distribution, f/r, %	52/48
Cargo capacity, cu ft	15.6
Fuel capacity, gal	26.4
Weight/power ratio, lb/hp	14.7

ENGINE

Type	V-8, liquid cooled, cast aluminum block and heads
Bore x stroke, in./mm	3.80 x 3.35/ 96.5 x 85.0
Displacement, ci/cc	303/4973
Compression ratio	10.0:1
Valve gear	DOHC, 4 valves/cylinder
Fuel/induction system	Multipoint EFI
Horsepower	
hp @ rpm, SAE net	322 @ 5700
Torque	
lb-ft @ rpm, SAE net	354 @ 3900
Horsepower/liter	64.7
Redline, rpm	6000
Recommended fuel	Unleaded premium

DRIVELINE

Transmission type	4-speed auto.
Gear ratios	
(1st)	3.87:1
(2nd)	2.25:1
(3rd)	1.44:1
(4th)	1.00:1
Axle ratio	2.65:1
Final-drive ratio	2.65:1
Engine rpm, 60 mph in top gear	2150

CHASSIS

Suspension	
Front	Upper and lower control arms, coil springs, anti-roll bar
Rear	Multilink, coil springs, anti-roll bar
Steering	
Type	Recirculating ball, power assist
Ratio	13.0:1
Turns, lock to lock	3.1
Turning circle	41.0
Brakes	
Front, type/dia., in.	Vented discs/12.6
Rear, type/dia., in.	Vented discs/11.8
Anti-lock	Standard
Wheels and tires	
Wheel size, in.	16 x 7.5
Wheel type/material	Forged aluminum alloy
Tire size	235/60ZR16
Tire mfr. and model	Dunlop SP Sport D8M2

INSTRUMENTATION

Instruments	160-mph speedo; 7000-rpm tach; clock; instant mpg; fuel level; coolant temp; oil pressure
Warning lamps	Battery; oil level; brake; radiator; ABS; lamps; airbag

PERFORMANCE AND TEST DATA

Acceleration, sec	
0-30 mph	3.0
0-40 mph	4.2
0-50 mph	5.7
0-60 mph	7.4
0-70 mph	9.6
0-80 mph	12.0
Standing quarter mile	
sec @ mph	15.7 @ 91.4
Braking, ft	
30-0 mph	32
60-0 mph	131
Handling	
Lateral acceleration, g	0.79
Speed through 600-ft slalom, mph	62.2
Speedometer error, mph	
Indicated	Actual
30	30
40	39
50	49
60	58
Interior noise, dBA	
Idling in neutral	44
Steady 60 mph in top gear	63

FUEL ECONOMY

EPA, city/hwy., mpg	13/16
Est. range, city/hwy., miles	343/422

CAR and DRIVER
10 BEST

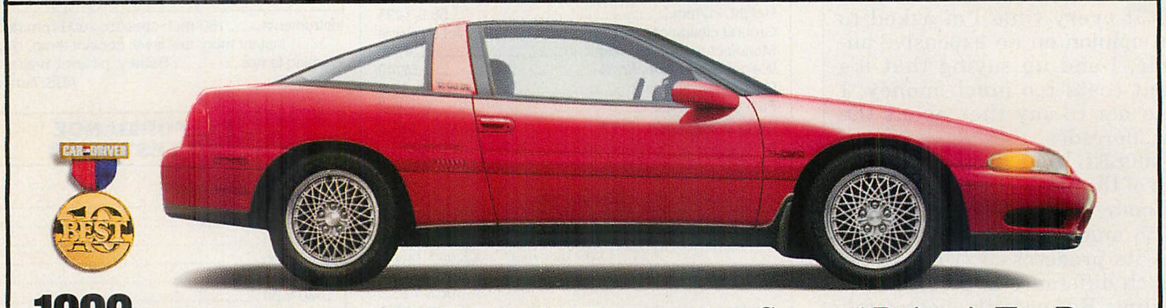
1989: Plymouth Laser RS Turbo is named to Car and Driver's Ten Best.

CAR and DRIVER
10 BEST

1990: Plymouth Laser RS Turbo is named to Car and Driver's Ten Best.

CAR and DRIVER
10 BEST

1991: Plymouth Laser RS Turbo is named to Car and Driver's Ten Best.



1992: Plymouth Laser RS Turbo AWD named to Car and Driver's Ten Best.

THE GUYS IN RESEARCH TELL US ADVERTISING IS MORE EFFECTIVE WITH REPETITION.

Monotony has never been so exciting. In fact, the redesigned 1992 Laser RS Turbo AWD goes from 0 to 60 in just 6.4 seconds, our fastest time yet.* To catch a glimpse of one, visit your nearest Chrysler-Plymouth dealer, or call 1-800-PLYMOUTH.

Advantage: Plymouth
A DIVISION OF CHRYSLER CORPORATION

OWNER'S CHOICE PROTECTION PLAN
7/70 POWERTRAIN OR
3/36 BUMPER-TO-BUMPER

*USAC test, 1992. **Buckle up for safety!** © Plymouth/Chrysler Corp., 1992. 36USC380.

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USA

THE FASTEST ROAD IN AMERICA

170 MPH IN A 55 ZONE

C.VA
KING
L5
GOEBEL

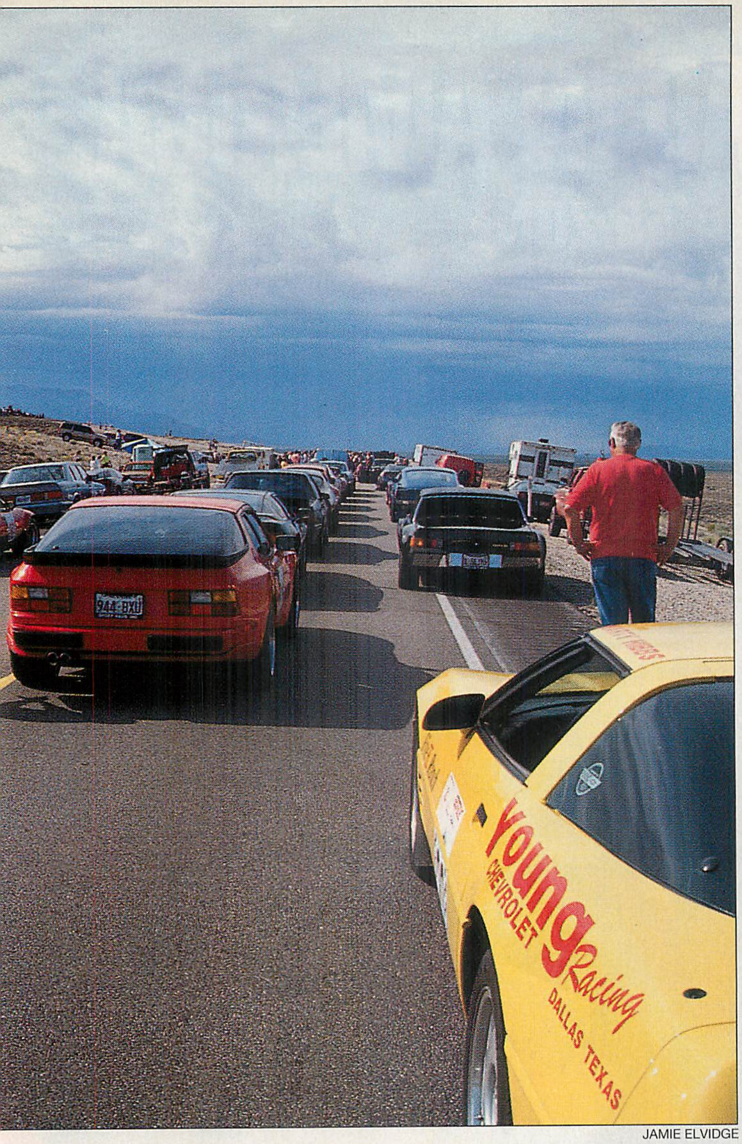
by C. Van Tune

ILLUSTRATION BY JOE GOEBEL

The speedometer of the Dodge Stealth R/T twin turbo brushes past 150 mph as we crest a small rise and head across the flat expanse of Nevada desert. Ahead of us, nothing but sand, sagebrush, and 90 more miles of two-lane asphalt. Throttle down and accelerating, the revs climb steadily as we eat up high plains acreage at an astonishing rate: 155...160...165 mph, and the Stealth is still running strong.

The rough pavement under our wheels rushes past at over 250 feet per second—more than 110-mph faster than the posted speed limit. At this velocity, things happen quickly. What are only minor undulations in the road surface at posted speeds are now severe shocks, and hitting an unanticipated dip can ruin your day in a big way. Likewise, the speck you just saw in the distance is now past you in a blur of light and shadow you can't even identify. And the turn that looked so gradual at 55 mph is now a true white-knuckler.

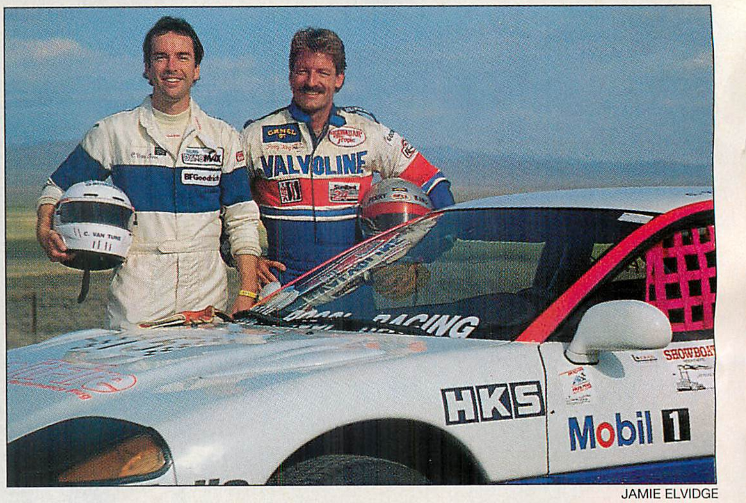
This is no racetrack, and you're not making hundreds of laps around the same loop of well-manicured pavement. It's a lonesome stretch of highway a hundred miles from the middle of nowhere,



JAMIE ELVIDGE

Everything from passenger sedans to full-out race machines came to run. This event is open to anyone with a driver's license.

STEALTH
Hella
Mopar
PERFORMANCE
HKS



JAMIE ELVIDGE

Author (left) and fearless navigator Perry King before a 170-mph assault on the fastest road in America.

and is legitimately the fastest road in America.

We take a sweeping right-hander and blast over another small rise without lifting. Before we can react, we're past a dark object parked on the shoulder, its radar gun in place. But the Nevada Highway Patrol car doesn't give chase. Nor does the officer radio ahead to have us intercepted and taken to the local gray-bar hotel. Today, unlike any other day, or on any other road in the nation, we're golden. Immune to speed laws. Unafraid of the police. Like we're carrying a diplomat's passport—only better.

This unbelievable exception to the go-to-jail rule is a biannual (May and September) event known as the Silver State Open Road Race. Organized by two-time Indy 500 winner Rodger Ward, this contest is no clandestine meeting of a bunch of nefarious speed freaks. In fact, it's run with the complete support of the state of Nevada and uses Highway Patrol officers for security duty. The event is open to anyone with a valid driver's license and a car that passes technical inspection. You don't need prior racing experience, nor does your car have to be a fully prepped race machine. You could run the family minivan if you wanted.

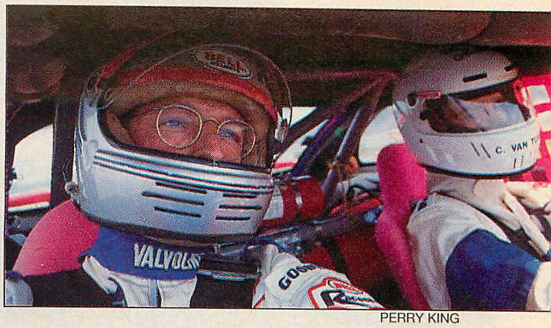
We'd heard the stories about previous races. Not-so-tall tales of 200-mph tube-frame Camaros, twin-turbo Panteras, and Porsche 935 race cars. The choice of what to drive was getting more complicated every minute. We put our heads together and considered the variables: altitude (above 6000 feet at the starting line) makes for thin atmosphere, so a turbo- or supercharged car is a smart choice; sustained high speeds (we planned to average close to 160 mph) demands a tough driveline; unknown weather (it can rain, hail, or even snow in the desert during September) makes all-wheel drive a *logical* partner. In short, we wanted a fast, reliable, safe, all-wheel-drive performance car. Of the models available, we ultimately settled on the Dodge Stealth R/T twin turbo.

But where do we get a raceable car, and what to do about adding the necessary safety gear? A call to IMSA multi-champion team owner Paul Rossi solved both our problems. He offered one of the team's new Stealth IMSA Supercar racers, which is outfitted not only with the required safety gear, but also a balanced and blueprinted engine. Rossi had prepped the Eagle Talon we raced with success at Pikes Peak last year, and we knew we could count on his team to have a strong-running Stealth.

Thus, on Sept. 8, 1991, some 87 cars lined up on Nevada State Highway 318 for a speed contest unlike any oth-

C. Van Tune
15
Performance Exhaust
DYNOMAX
momo
DODGE STEALTH
MONROE
Infinity
Mobil 1

SCOTT KILLEEN



PERRY KING

At 170 mph, in the rain, the outside world is one big blur. Thanks to the Stealth's open exhaust and lack of side windows, we were too wet and hearing-impaired to notice.

15
2
Mobil 1
Hella
Mopar PERFORMANCE
DODGE STEALTH

C. VAN TUNE

At the finish, there were war stories: 200-mph rollovers, exploded engines, and "unlimited class" winner (red Mitsubishi in background) John Hennessey's 175-mph encounter with a crow. The crow lost.

er. Navigator (and television/film actor) Perry King strapped into the Stealth beside me, and we awaited the start of the Silver State race. To reduce the chances of any door handle-to-door handle racing, the cars are started at one-minute intervals. Safety is repeatedly stressed by race officials, who'll red-flag any person driving poorly or over the safety equipment speed bracket in which they're entered.

The pavement just past the starting line is streaked with long burnout marks of the unlimited class cars, as each tries its best to strike fear into the competition with a show of power. Impressive, but not necessarily smart for an endurance race. This 91.5-mile challenge is more like a lengthy full-throttle dyno pull and is really tough on equipment. By the way, none of the expected 200-mph cars finished the race; most broke down well before the halfway point.

The noise level inside the Stealth is near deafening at 170 mph. Rossi had removed the door glass per IMSA rules, which (with the straight-pipe exhaust that exited under the driver's door) limited communication to the non-verbal type. Therefore, with hastily scribbled notes on a clipboard, Perry directed me to turn "L3" or "R4," and so on, rating the severity of the upcoming corner on a scale of 1-5, based on the course notes.

About 50 miles into the race, a hot-rod Pantera lost a tire (at nearly 200 mph, according to race officials) and rolled—three times. Miraculously, its driver suffered only a sprained finger. The restart was LeMans style, with a half dozen cars scrambling for position. The Stealth and a Porsche 930 were pretty well matched, followed by *Hot Rod* magazine writer Joe Pettitt in a Trans Am Turbo, and a supercharged Mustang GT.

Then the rains came. Torrential rains. Lightning bolts. The sort of downpour-from-hell that demands you pull off the road and wait till it stops. So we all drove through it at top speed, of course. Windshield wipers? Don't bother. The wind flow over the front of the car pulls the blades away from the glass at these speeds, rendering them completely worthless. Admittedly, we had backed down to 135 mph at this point, but were still 100 mph too fast to see what we were doing. A fact corroborated as we passed a highway warning sign, its arrow pointing sharp left.

"Did that say "45 mph?" I scream across to Perry. He can't hear me, and, besides, it's too late now anyway. A sharp, slightly downhill, off-camber left-hand corner is upon us before we can brake. We're expecting the spin to start at any instant. Instead, thanks to the Stealth's all-wheel-drive, we make it through unscathed. After finishing the series of sharp elevation changes and turns in what's known as "the Narrows," it's a straight-line drag race to the finish.

A few hearty spectators braved the downpour to watch the Team Rossi Stealth cross the finish line. The fastest "unlimited class" finisher of the day was John Hennessey (modified Mitsubishi 3000GT VR-4) with a 166.28-mph average. We took second place in the "up to 160-mph speed bracket" with a 156.26-mph average, but were soaking wet and nearly deaf upon finishing.

There's no big payoff for winning the Silver State Open Road Race. No huge cash prize, nor even a kiss from a beauty queen. A modest trophy and your possibly abused car are all you take home with you. Plus, of course, the memories of a driving experience like none other. A four-wheeled fantasy fulfillment on 91.5 miles of desert road. If this sounds like your kind of event, contact Rodger Ward (6171 Archibald Ave., Alta Loma, CA 91701; 714/980-5406). Leave the radar detector at home.

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Flareside is here. Now Ford delivers style three ways.

Here's even more proof that America's Best-Built* full-size pickup can be more than tough. It can also make a unique statement about you. Personalizing the new Flareside is easy. It carries a cargo of choices. First, decide between a regular or SuperCab. Then, between 4x2 or available pushbutton 4WD. Next, check the wide range of multi-port EFI engines. With colors like Bimini Blue and Iris, deciding won't be easy. Picking the comfort and convenience features you want will be; the list is very, very long.

Discover the new Flareside, the Nite, and the Sport. You'll see just how well Ford toughness and your style get along.

*"Best-Built" claims based on an average of consumer-reported problems in surveys of all 1991 models designed and built in North America. Sales by Division. Buckle up – together we can save lives.

Ford

THE BEST-BUILT, BEST-SELLING AMERICAN TRUCKS
ARE BUILT FORD TOUGH.

Acura Legend Coupe LS

In a few short years, the Legend has become a standard in its class. And now, the Legend Coupe is better than ever. Its new 3.2-liter 24-valve V-6 delivers a hearty 200 horsepower, up significantly from the previous model. Plus, with new styling, improved ride and handling, and refined ergonomics, the Coupe is ready and willing to defend its turf.

Acura Vigor GS

This all-new sedan is designed to plug in nicely between the upscale Legend and sporty Integra in the Acura lineup. Powered by a smooth 2.5-liter five-cylinder engine good for 176 horsepower, and equipped with double-wishbone suspension front and rear and standard leather upholstery, the Vigor is a good balance between comfort and sportiness.

Audi 100 CS

The redesigned fourth-generation 100 is the evolutionary next step for Audi's prestigious 100-series sedan. A new 172-horsepower 2.8-liter V-6 replaces the previous five-cylinder engine. The body has been fine-tuned in styling, rigidity, and dimensions. And the top-of-the-line CS model indulges the driver in creature comforts.

BMW 325i

BMW's third-generation 3-series sedan is a significantly improved player in the sport/luxury wars. With a firm, sport-tuned suspension, responsive 189-horsepower 2.5-liter 24-valve DOHC inline six, more contemporary body styling, and handsome, well-integrated interior, the 325i clearly means business.

Eagle Summit AWD Wagon

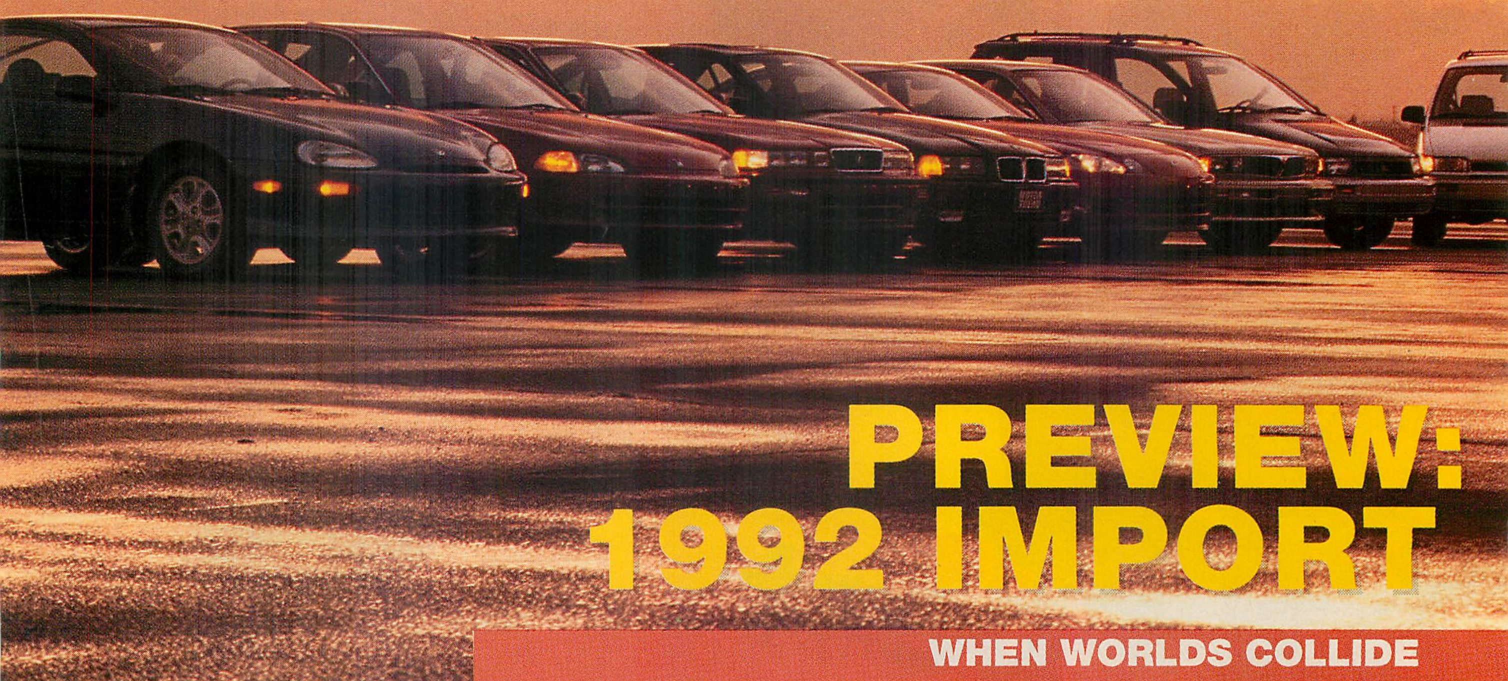
The '92 Summit Wagon is the Eagle version of Mitsubishi's all-new Expo LRV. Taller, wider, and roomier than a conventional compact wagon, the Summit offers such features as a sliding rear side door and removable rear seats, in addition to all-wheel drive, easy car-like maneuverability, and peppy 116-horsepower 2.4-liter engine.

Honda Civic EX Sedan

The popular Civic continues its upmarket evolution with the roomiest, most powerful, and most sophisticated incarnation yet. In addition to its new-from-the-ground-up body, the top-of-the-line EX sports a snappy 125-horsepower 1.6-liter 16-valve four with variable valve timing, ABS, and a host of welcome features.

Honda Prelude Si 4WS

This new and improved Prelude comes packing some pretty impressive attributes, beginning with a potent 160-horsepower 2.3-liter 16-valve four-cylinder engine, sleek new body styling, impeccable road manners, and sophisticated four-wheel-steering system.



PREVIEW: 1992 IMPORT

WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE

by Rik Paul

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SCOTT KILLEEN

Fasten your seatbelt, pull on your driving gloves, and set your shades, because here we go again. For the next issue, we're back in the driver's seat in the most ambitious comparison test of the year. After two weeks of rigorous testing on the dragstrip, slalom, skidpad, highways, byways, and twisty mountain roads of Southern and Central California, our judges will pick the most significant new import car of the '92 model year.

This year's competition is a virtual Who's Who of the latest trends, technolo-

Hyundai Elantra GLS

Hyundai's latest is a sub-compact sedan designed as a value-packed bridge between the economical Excel and the upscale Sonata. Our ICOY nominee is the top-of-the-line GLS, equipped with a Mitsubishi-designed 113-horsepower 1.6-liter 16-valve four-banger, fully independent suspension, and a healthy list of standard equipment at an appealing price.

Lexus SC 400

From the attractively original, U.S.-designed exterior, you might think this sleek-looking coupe was a clean-sheet project. But under the skin are many of the niceties that made the LS 400 sedan so popular, including an ultra-smooth 4-liter 32-valve alloy V-8 and an innovative, pampering interior. Add in a sport-tuned suspension, and the SC promises to be a hot contender.

Mazda 929

Meet Mazda's new flagship. This all-new, upscale 929 is every bit as original in form and design as its predecessor was mainstream. With its revamped 3-liter 24-valve V-6, Jaguarish styling, and host of sophisticated appointments, it's the most luxurious Mazda ever.

Mazda MX-3 GS

The optional 130-horsepower 1.8-liter 24-valve alloy V-6 in Mazda's brand-new pocket-rocket is not only the sole V-6 in its class, it's also the smallest automotive V-6 in production. That, plus the MX-3's sinewy lines, fully independent suspension, and speed-sensitive rack-and-pinion steering, gives this spicy little 2+2 a personality all its own.

Mitsubishi Diamante LS

Mitsubishi's 3000GT VR-4 took home last year's ICOY trophy with a winning combination of performance, luxury, and value. This year, Mitsubishi's flagship Diamante LS sedan applies the same formula. Based on the 3000GT SL platform and sporting the same 202-horsepower 3-liter V-6, along with traction control and adjustable suspension, this one bears watching.

Mitsubishi Expo SP

Not a station wagon. Not a van. The Expo SP borrows from both, with lower, passenger-car-like ride and handling, three rows of seats to carry seven passengers, a wide variety of interior configurations, and plenty of cargo capacity. The Expo is definitely in a class of its own.

Mitsubishi Expo LRV Sport

The LRV is basically a short-wheelbase, five-passenger version of Mitsubishi's Expo. This roomy, compact wagon features a snappy 1.8-liter 16-valve four-cylinder engine, sliding side door, and removable/foldable rear seats for extra carrying capacity. The Sport version includes an upgraded interior and exterior.

Subaru SVX

The sleek and sexy SVX is Subaru's debut in the upper-$20,000 luxury sport coupe class. With a 230-horsepower 3.3-liter 24-valve horizontally opposed six, all-wheel drive, smart four-speed automatic transmission, and the capability to post an impressive lateral g on the skidpad, this is crowding 300ZX territory.

MOTOR TREND'S CAR OF THE YEAR

gies, and designs from overseas. With 24 invitations extended, we have a final field of 15 entries from Japan, Germany, and Korea. Opting not to participate were Mercedes-Benz (S-Class), Toyota (Camry and Paseo), Ford/Mercury (the Crown Victoria and Grand Marquis are imports by content), and Plymouth (the new Colt Vista is Plymouth's version of the Mitsubishi Expo LRV and Eagle Summit Wagon). Meanwhile, Lexus decided to not enter its ES 300 and SC 300, and Honda's new CRX wasn't ready in time to compete.

Our final 15 nominees range from the sultry to the ground-breaking, the extravagant to the value-packed, and the sophisticated to the pure-and-simple fun to drive. Here's a profile of each candidate. Next month, we'll bring you the full play-by-play, color commentary, and view from the winner's circle.

Throughout the course of automotive advertising, you've no doubt heard cars compared to everything from fighter planes to bullet trains.

But you won't find such comparisons here.

What lies before you is nothing less than the most refined, most sophisticated and most uncompromising sports car ever created. An automobile designed to perform extraordinarily on all aspects—power, handling, braking and styling—in one harmonious package. A car unlike anything.

180° FROM

A car simply called the 300ZX® Turbo.

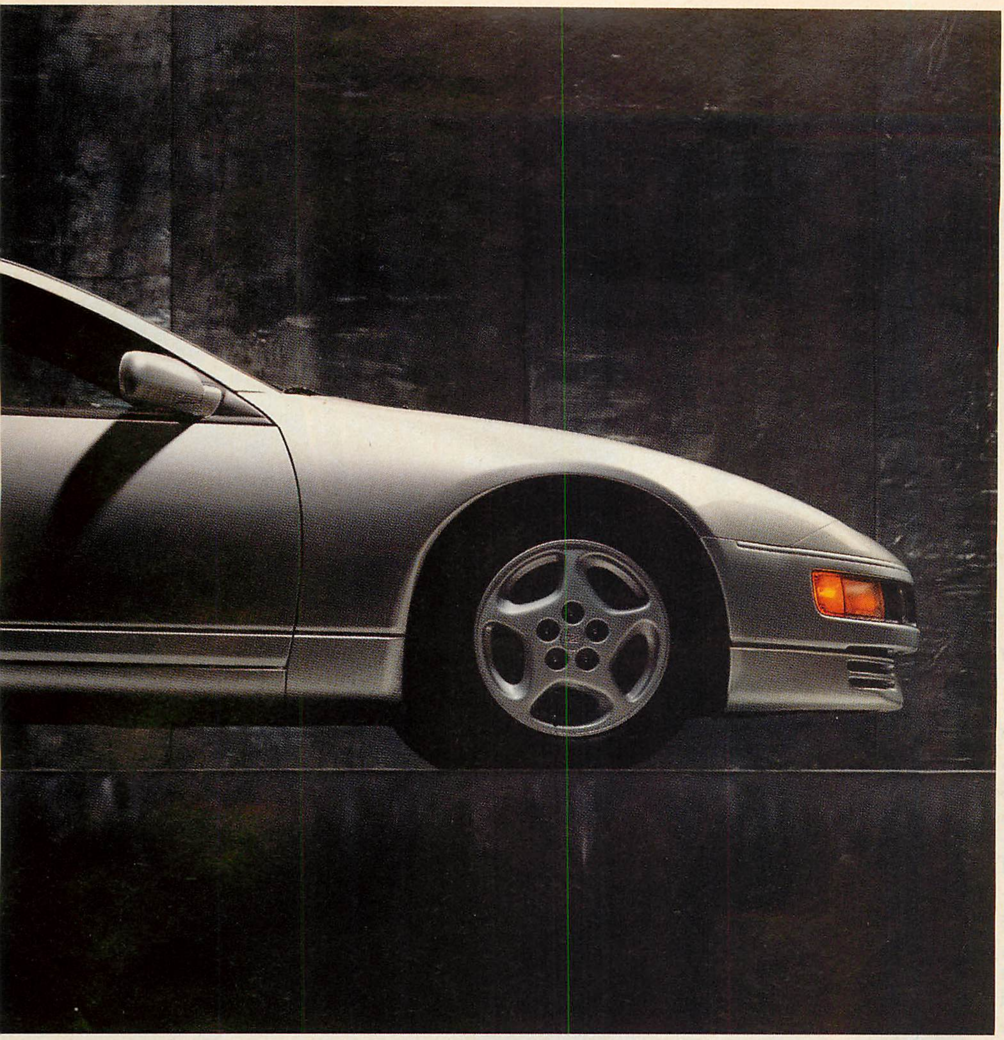
Inspect it thoroughly and you'll see there's no needless gimmickry. No uncalled for gadgets. No fluff to be found. Just clean, uninterrupted lines and technological advances aerospace engineers would be proud to call their own.

Tap the accelerator and the Turbo Z® will instantly display awe-inspiring quickness. Something that can only be expected from a 300hp, 3.0-liter, 24-valve DOHC V6 engine with sequential multi-point fuel injection and variable valve timing.

Tap the brakes, and you'll discover an equally inspired response in the opposite direction, thanks to ABS technology.

Yet, while the Turbo Z can leave virtually any automobile in its wake, what is truly astounding is the fact it never forgets its manners.

Super HICAS™ 4-wheel steering, a viscous coupled limited slip differential and 4-wheel independent multi-link front and rear suspension system



Another writer at *Motor Trend* said "No matter how you cut it, this is still the best handling car for the money anywhere."

And following a twelve-month inspection, the wordsmiths at *Automobile Magazine* exclaimed "It rewarded the early infatuations of its first admirers with unrelenting goodness, convincing them that their initial impressions had been shrewdly accurate."

Considering such head-swelling praise, it isn't surprising the Turbo Z has won nearly every award ever bestowed by automotive aficionados.

ANYTHING.

enable the 300ZX to gracefully handle curves like Monet handled a brush.

As you might well have imagined, to the automotive press, the Turbo Z presents a field day at the typewriter.

One *Car and Driver* journalist wrote "Though not even two years old, the 300ZX Turbo is already the established top gun in the sports-coupe class… Such performance, refinement, and poise simply cannot be had anywhere else at anything near the price."

Including being named by *Car and Driver* as one of the "Ten Best Cars" for both 1990 and 1991.

If you've yet to experience an automobile that makes all description somehow seem inadequate, visit your authorized Nissan® Dealer and arrange an invigorating test-drive at your earliest convenience.

You'll discover that while in a Turbo Z, no matter which way you're going, it will feel like a whole new direction.

NISSAN®

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HUMAN RACE.®

Call 1-800-NISSAN-6 for more information. Smart people always read the fine print. And they always wear their seat belts.

'69 Yenko Chevelle 427

KING OF THE MEAN STREETS

by C. Van Tune

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JERRY GARNS

When Carroll Shelby took the racing world by storm with his GT350 Mustang, Chevrolet was caught napping. That was in 1965, still two full years before the Camaro would come to be, and a time when Ford was kicking bowtie butt. During the same period, road racer Don Yenko had been making something of a name for himself behind the wheel of various Corvettes. Yenko studied Shelby's modus operandi and reasoned that, with the resources of his own Chevrolet dealership, he could build a similar type of high-performance sports car.

Yenko convinced Chevrolet Product Promotion Department bigwig Vince Piggins to help him construct 200 specially modified Corvairs. These cars were outfitted by Yenko with hi-po induction and exhaust systems, shorter gearing, less compliant suspension components, and racing tires. At a race weight of around 2000 pounds, and with close to 200 horsepower in Yenko-tweaked trim, the turbocharged Corvair "Stinger" proved a valiant road racer. Competing against top drivers in machines like the Porsche 911, Yenko's driver Jerry Thompson clinched the '67 SCCA national championship.

Unfortunately, the timing of Yenko's order for another batch of

YENKO SC
MOTOR TREND

MOTOR TREND

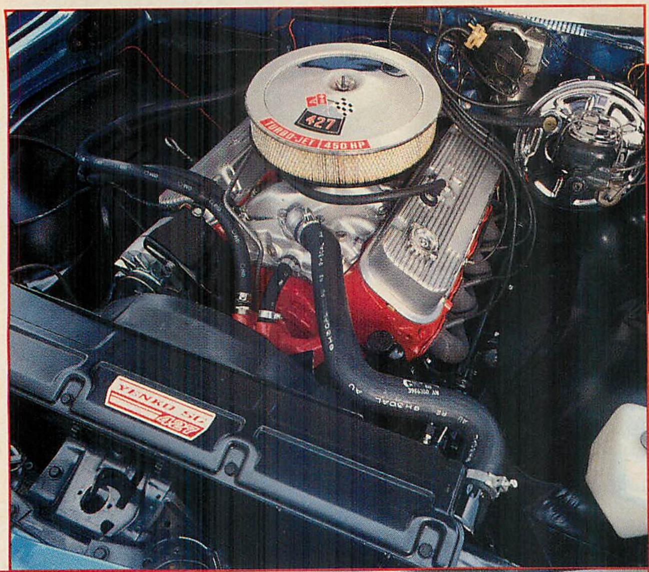
Corvairs for the '68 model year could not have been worse. Ralph Nader's book, *Unsafe at Any Speed*, had just been released and effectively killed public interest in all Corvairs—modified or otherwise. In the process of trying to unload the moribund Corvair Stingers, Yenko struck a deal with SoCal Chevy dealer Peyton Cramer. Cramer agreed to floor a few of Yenko's hot Corvairs in trade for taking some Dana Camaros that Cramer's dealership stuffed with 427 cubic-inch Chevy motors.

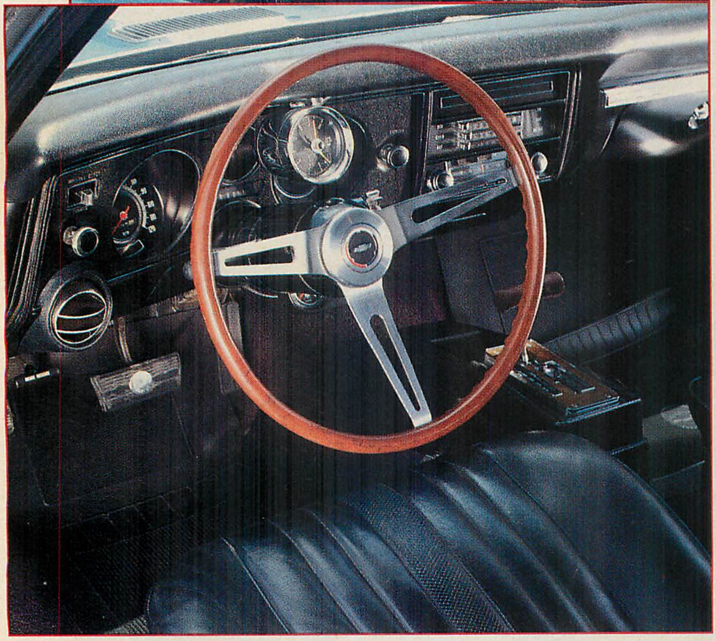
This arrangement grew, and Yenko was soon building his own modified Camaros. Like Shelby did with his Mustangs, Yenko merely removed the factory 350 or 396-cubic-inch engine and dropped in the more powerful 427 motor. A total of 54 Yenko Camaros were built in 1967; 64 in 1968.

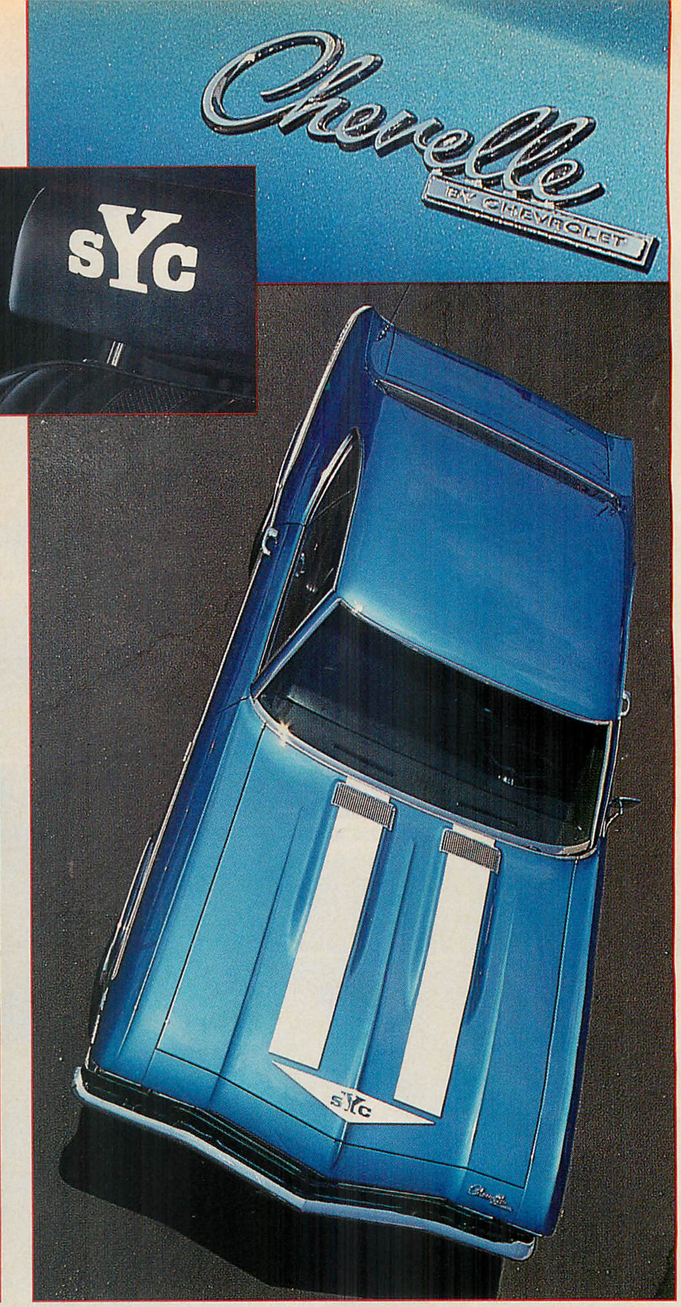
The drag-race-oriented Yenko Camaros performed well, and captured Chevrolet's attention in the process. Yenko was able to convince Piggins to assist him in obtaining a GM factory warranty for the engine transplant cars. Yenko's ultimate plan was to have Chevrolet install the 427 megamotor right at the factory, thereby saving him the time and money required to perform the engine swap. By using a then little-known corporate loophole called a Central Office Production Order (COPO) Yenko, Piggins, and crew were able to sneak their special factory-equipped 427 Camaros out of what amounted to be the back door of the assembly plant.

The COPO paperwork allowed the assembly line to build a special combination of parts otherwise unavailable for production. Basically, it was designed to give latitude for special fleet sales orders, in case Avis wanted a run of bright-yellow Impalas with six-cylinder engines, or some other such anomaly. In Yenko's case, he used the system to deliver to his Canonsburg, Pennsylvania, dealer 500 '69 Camaros with 427-cubic-inch/425-horsepower V-8 engines (order code "L72"), Z28 suspensions, close-ratio four-speed transmissions, and 140-mph speedometers. Yenko would add his badging, serial number plate, auxiliary gauges, and aggressive set of stripes.

Some 50 all-aluminum 427 "ZL-1" engines were even surreptitiously installed by Piggins' group into ordi-







nary Camaros and sneaked out of the factory to eagerly awaiting Chevy-supplied racers. For that brief period of time, Chevrolet was like a giant automotive candy store, and those with the greatest sweet-tooths of all were minding the till.

Super Stock & Drag Illustrated magazine tested a Yenko Camaro in 1969 and reported on its incredible performance. With narrow drag slicks and open exhausts, the four-speed Yenko blasted away to a 11.9-second/114.6-mph pass. Even a Cobra 427 would have to work hard to beat that.

As a response to inquiries from across the country, 1969 was also the year Don Yenko experimented with a COPO Chevelle. Larger and heavier than the Camaro, the Chevelle needed more grunt than its factory 396-cubic-inch V-8 could provide, so Yenko called Piggins and added 99 L-72-code 427 Chevelles to his arsenal of dragstrip performers.

Like the COPO Camaro program, the Chevelles were each built by Chevrolet with a 427 engine. Each "Yenko Super Car" (note "sYc" logos on the headrests) Chevelle was trimmed and badged as a standard Malibu, excepting the inclusion of an "SS" domed hood. Special heavy-duty suspension components, a 12-bolt Positraction rear axle with 4.10:1 gearing, and front disc brakes were also factory installed. Yenko added his own emblems and graphics, as he did on the Camaros. Inside, factory bucket seats were retained, and the Turbo 400 automatic or Muncie M21 manual transmission had the option of receiving a Hurst shifter. Augmenting the factory instruments was a Yenko-installed Stewart-Warner electronic tachometer.

Although not as lightning quick as the 427 Camaro, Yenko's mighty Chevelle was no slouch. Quarter-mile times in the low 12-second range were everyday occurrences, as many unsuspecting Mustang, GTO and Road Runner drivers soon learned. The car profiled here is owned by Peter Sidlow. It's been carefully restored and includes the ultra-rare Mickey Thompson "Super Scavenger" headers and less rare "M/T" valve covers that were Yenko options.

After completing the COPO Camaro and Chevelle projects, Yenko continued to run his Chevrolet dealerships, as well as perform his magic on later-model Camaros, Novas, and even Vegas. But none had the look, sound, or brute force of the COPO specials. **MT**

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*Road & Track article based on 1991 model Passat. ©1991 Volkswagen

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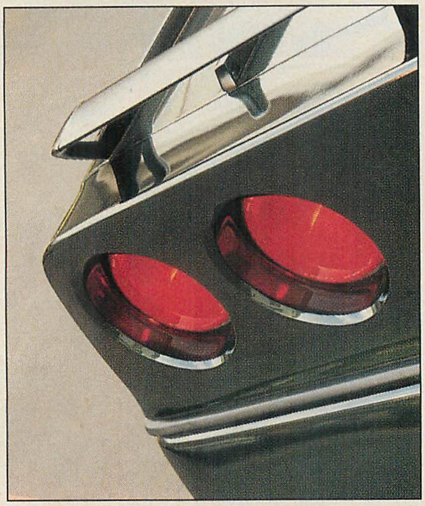
LONG-TERM WRAPUP

BY DANIEL CHARLES ROSS

'90 CHEVROLET CORVETTE CONVERTIBLE

FLAWED BEAUTY

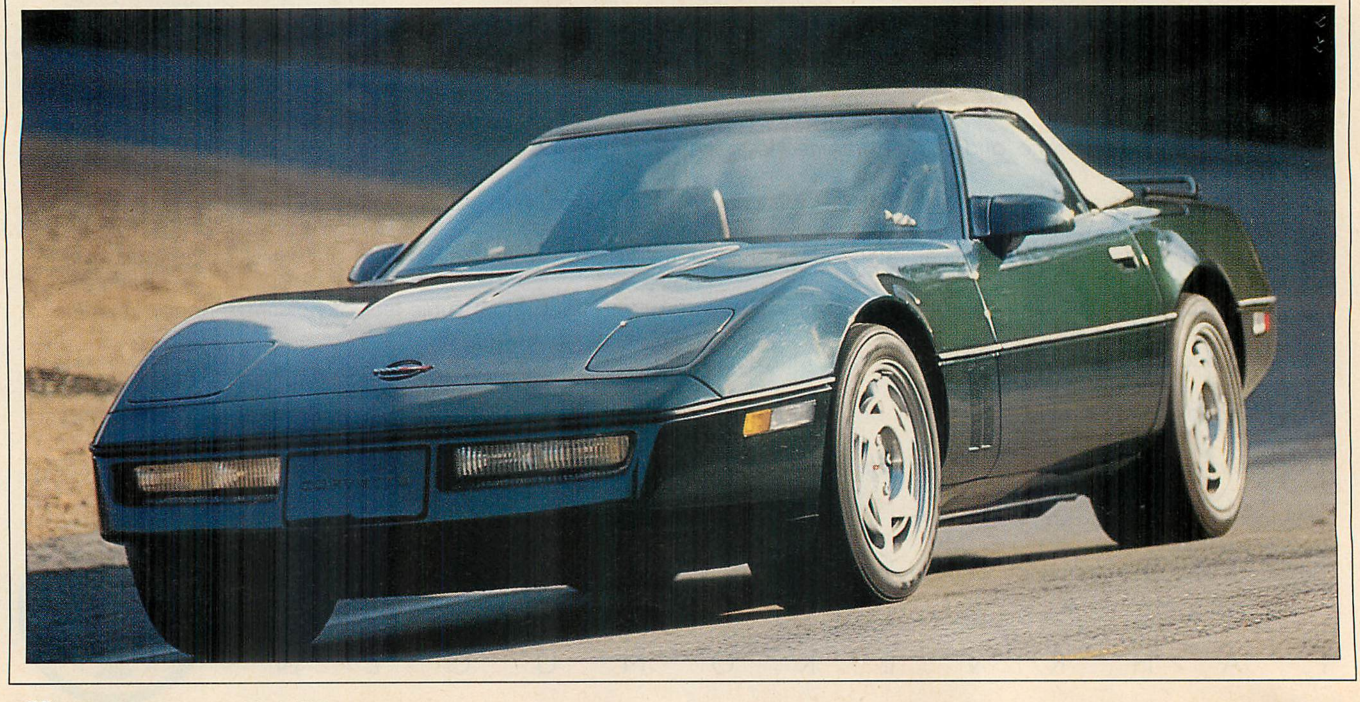


As the author of *Motor Trend*'s long-term closeouts, I usually utilize the logbook comments of our editors' experiences combined with the owner's survey results to compose this story each month. But one car I've taken a special interest in is this month's subject, the Polo Green Metallic '90 Chevy Corvette convertible that's spent most of its time at the magazine here with me in Detroit. I ordered it precisely the way it was delivered and put most of the miles on its clock, so, in a sense, I'm its father. That's why this closeout is a bittersweet task for me. My bouncing baby boy turned out to be a bit of a problem child.

But even the most frustrated father looks back on fond memories. When the sun's shining, the top's down, and the compact disc player's turned up, there are few finer moments out there. If handed a Corvette's keys, our more competitive editors would head directly to the autocross course. (We didn't ask in the survey, but suspect that a good number of owners do likewise.) In this pylon-lined world of opposite-lock power slides, a Corvette is often the fastest of all stock-category cars. Other editors used the Corvette to blow out cobwebs or blow off deadline frustrations with a more than spirited run down Mullholland Drive or up Angeles Crest Highway. Again, few challenge the Corvette when it's tail-out, belly to the ground.

Respondents to our Vette survey are fairly enchanted, too. Style was the first reason 51.2 percent bought their cars, with performance, previous Vette experience, and handling filling out the list. Style was the top response to the "specific like" question for 55.2 percent, and again, handling, performance, and power answers duplicate previous responses. Despite these positive replies, an unusually large number of respondents, 44.1 percent, reported mechanical trouble.

The Corvette has improved steadily over the years. In fact, it's been significantly modified and upgraded just in



TECH DATA

'90 Chevrolet Corvette

GENERAL/POWERTRAIN

Body style	2-door, 2-passenger
Vehicle configuration	Front engine, rear drive
Engine configuration	V-8, OHV, 2 valves/cylinder
Engine displacement, ci/cc	350/5733
Horsepower, hp @ rpm, SAE net	250 @ 4400
Torque, lb-ft @ rpm, SAE net	350 @ 3200
Transmission	4-speed auto.
Axle ratio	3.07:1

DIMENSIONS

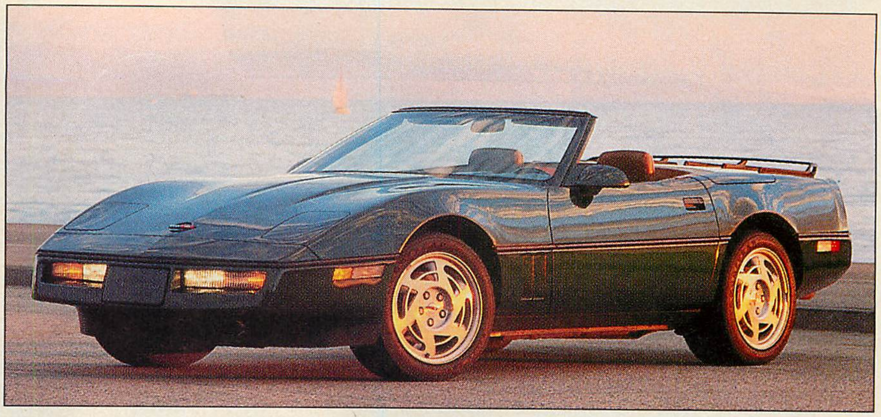
Wheelbase, in./mm	96.2/2444
Length, in./mm	176.5/4483
Curb weight, lb	3350
Fuel capacity, gal	20.0
Fuel economy, EPA city/hwy., mpg	17/25

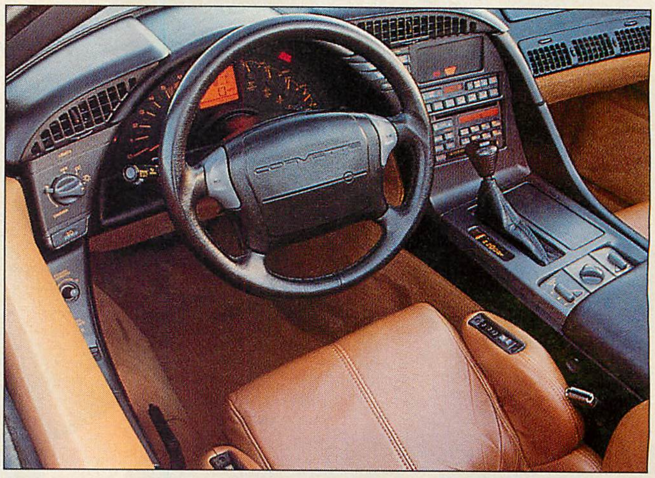
CHASSIS

Suspension, f/r	Independent/independent
Steering	Rack and pinion, power assist
Brakes, f/r	Vented discs/vented discs, ABS
Wheels	17 x 9.5, alloy
Tires	275/40ZR17

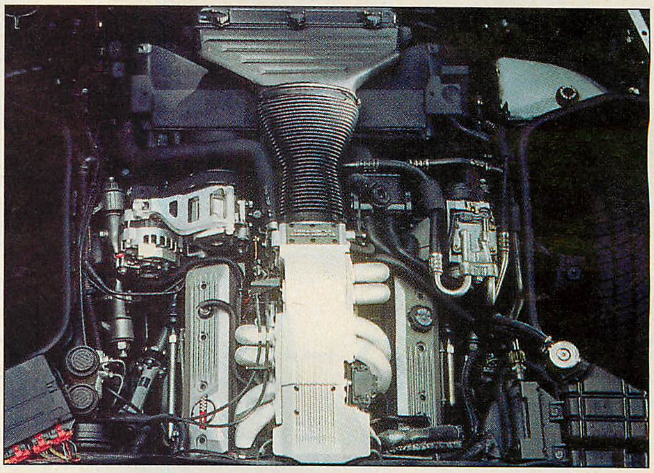
PRICE

Base price	$37,264
Price as tested	$45,040





There may be no more perfect automotive color match than a saddle leather interior and deep green metallic exterior, certainly in a convertible of the Vette's allure. The soft top was saddle, too. Optional sport seats provide tenacious grip for combat, but are uncomfortable on long trips.



It seems as if Chevy's 5.7-liter pushrod V-8 has been around since Biblical times, but it offers plenty of valid reasons—250 of them at 4400 rpm. The four-speed automatic transmission is the perfect complement; it gets the power down effectively and leaves a hand free for waving at adoring throngs.

the two model years since our long-term '90 ragtop was born. But with the rapid onset of electronic instrument suites, black-box engine computers, sophisticated accessories and the like, the opportunity for failure can increase in lock-step with the added capacity. Electrical problems are often the top-reported vehicle flaws, and 18.3 percent of Vette survey respondents agreed. With our Vette, they cropped up the first day.

Soon after I picked up the car, I encountered a driving rain. As the new wiper blades swept into action, their long tips hopped peculiarly over the expansive windshield. After only a few uncertain swipes, the tips finally jammed together in the center of the glass and locked up, blowing a critical fuse. Turns out, all climate control authority is also on the wiper circuit, and imprisoned in traffic in the blasting rain, the inside of the windows quickly fogged over. It was pretty interesting steering the car into the first gas station I found. The rain stopped five or six fuses later.

More frustrating was the $2000 optional removable hardtop. Perhaps the weatherstripping was a click too thin for the task, but the expensive top never did seal the power windows completely, permitting the rude intrusion of rain and carwashes on the driver's suit or Chevrolet's lovely saddle-tan leather interior. The top was useful the first half of the winter in that it considerably improves overall structural rigidity, reducing the inevitable squeaks and rattles that accompany droptops. The Vette rides tight as a space capsule with the top on, and heater effectiveness is demonstrably improved. The drawback of stowing the ragtop for the hardtop, however, is that storage space behind the buckets, already precious, is flat obliterated.

Soon the large, well-lit analog instruments took a complete dive. Out cold. About the same time, the "idiot lights" in various locations began an eccentric symphony of spurious warnings. Remember that scene in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, where the lights on the side of the spacecraft flashed in communication with the startled earth men? The first was the airbag light: That was scary. Did the light mean the bag system was non-operative, needed service, or that a countdown had started? The owner's manual was unclear. In

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several frustrating and unsatisfactory trips to multiple dealers, the complete instrument panel and its governing electronics were serviced twice, then replaced. This ultimately got the gauges working regularly and also cured the "idiot light" problems.

But other electronic terrorists lurked, waiting for their own chances to wreak havoc. The Low Tire Pressure Warning System is a $325 option purported to monitor via radio the pressure in the massive Goodyear Gatorbacks. Seemed like a neat thing; you'd want to know if a tire is getting soft at high speed. The LTPWS just never worked well. It often spoke up about soft tires, and though sometimes one was a few pounds off, normally the warning was bogus.

The goal of an all-weather test in a car such as the Vette was to experience it in more challenging weather than we normally get in Southern California. Rear-drive and those big Goodyears in Michigan snow can cause you to see God without the services of a televangelist. It's important to note some winter handling problems and water leaks we experienced wouldn't be shared with many Corvette owners, who tend to leave their pride and joy at home during snowstorms and tornadoes, and who also wouldn't run their Vettes through a car wash if their lives depended on it. And some Corvette engineers shared our inclement weather handling frustrations, with the resulting cures found on the '92 Vette. The traction control and Goodyear GS-Cs on the latest model mean Vette owners no longer need quake at predictions of precipitation, while a stiffer chassis and a host of other cures have eliminated much of the unwelcome squeaking and groaning we experienced.

Problems with false LTPWS warnings continued in California. The system was examined again during a service stop, and all four radio transmitters in the wheels were replaced, which cost us a $100 deductible. At the same time, scheduled service cost an additional $386 and change—of which 76 percent was labor.

After 19 percent of respondents reported "no complaints" to the specific complaint question, quality of materials and workmanship were popular gripes. These were areas respondents indicated when asked what improvements should be made to the car.

The Corvette's FX3 three-position adjustable suspension system was worth every buck of the $1695 it cost. The four-speed transmission was a performance dream, permitting quiet cruising or hot charges. Our survey respondents logged excellent or good answers to the tune of 96.7 percent for braking, 97 percent for performance, and 97.5 percent for handling. The AM/FM/CD/cassette system was part of a $1273 amenity group that included the electronic climate control, digital clock, and six-way power driver's seat, and that was a good investment, too. In sum, however, this flawed beauty was returned to its barn after about 17 months with considerable mixed feelings. The Vette is still the same blood-boiling sports car it was when new. And for all its problems, it never left us stranded. Over 98 percent of our respondents reported the Vette's fun-to-drive characteristics as excellent or good. But at over $45,000, our long-term test car had far too many problems to rate a satisfactory review. **MT**

DEALER RATINGS

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Sales practices	41.2%	38.2	12.3	8.3
Service practices	43.7	30.6	11.7	14.0

VITAL STATISTICS

Average mpg (city/highway)

By transmission	
6-sp. manual	17.4/23.8
4-sp. automatic	16.8/22.5

Price

L98 Coupe	
Average	$32,463
Range	$25,000-$39,400
L98 Convertible	
Average	$37,683
Range	$27,900-$45,310
ZR-1	
Average	$67,399
Range	$55,000-$89,000

Mileage

Total vehicle miles	3,136,375
Average miles/vehicle	13,233

STRENGTH/WEAKNESSES

Mechanical problems

Yes	44.1%
No	55.9

Type of mechanical problems

Electrical	18.3
Transmission	14.4
Airbag system light	12.5
Clutch	9.6
Oil leak	9.6
Brakes	6.7

Specific complaints

No complaints	19.0
Bumpy/hard ride	9.5
Car noise	9.0
Quality of materials	9.0
Workmanship	8.1
Ease of entry/exit	5.7
Price	5.7

What changes would you like?

More power	11.7
No change	9.8
Quality of interior materials	9.3
Exterior styling	8.8
Dash layout	7.3
Price	7.3
Workmanship	7.3

Specific likes

Styling	55.2
Handling	43.1
Performance	35.4
Power	28.1
Comfort	9.9

PURCHASE CONSIDERATIONS

Why did you buy a Corvette?

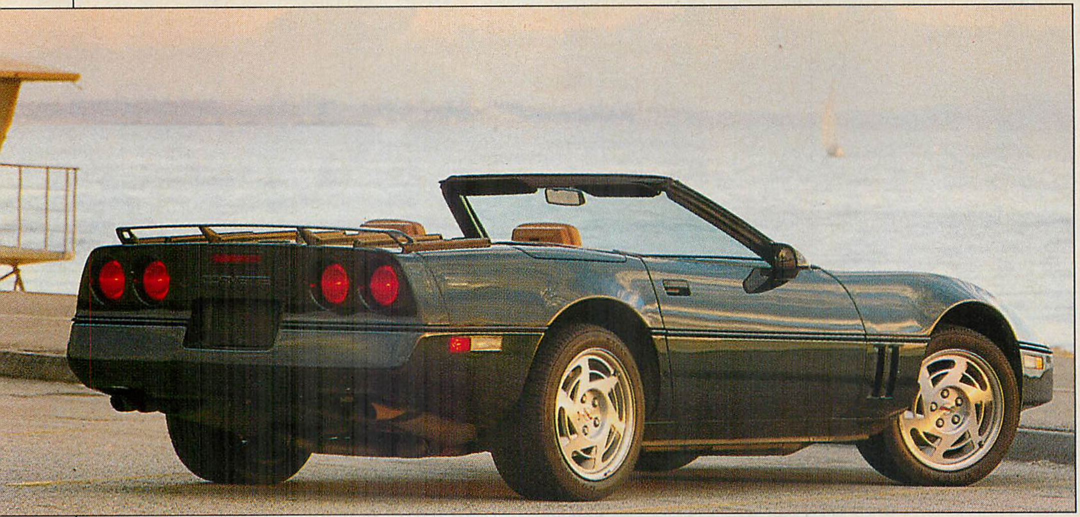
Style	51.2%
Performance	30.2
Past experience	19.0
Handling	16.1
Power	10.7
American made	10.7

Would you buy another Corvette?

Yes	75.1
No	6.0
Maybe	18.9

Would you buy another Chevrolet product?

Yes	64.1
No	14.5
Maybe	21.4



PERFORMANCE/CREATURE COMFORTS

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Performance rating	75.6%	21.4	1.7	1.3
FTD capabilities	85.5	12.8	1.3	0.4
Braking	81.9	14.8	3.0	0.4
Handling	80.6	16.9	1.7	0.8
Seat comfort	38.0	42.2	16.5	3.4
Overall quality and workmanship	38.4	46.8	10.5	4.2

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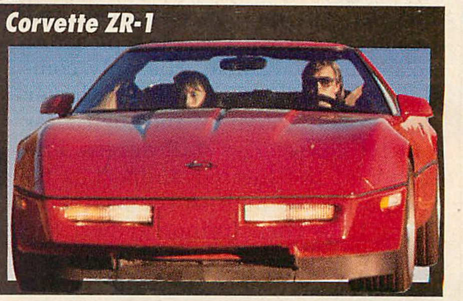
Corvette ZR-1



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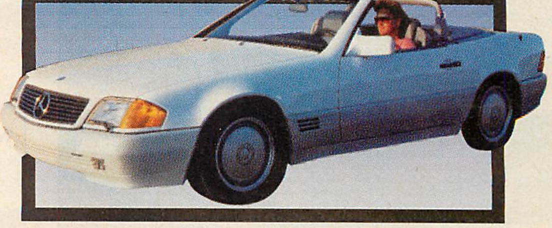
Mercedes 500SL



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The prize consists of the winner's choice of one of the following: an Acura NSX, a Mercedes 500SL, a Lotus Esprit Turbo SE, a Porsche 928 S4, or a Corvette ZR-1. Depending upon winner's choice, the prize will have the approximate retail value of one of the following: NSX: $65,300.00; 500SL: $96,500.00; Lotus Esprit: $86,800.00; 928 S4: $77,500.00; or ZR-1: $64,100.00.

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LONG-TERM UPDATE

BY GREG COPPOCK

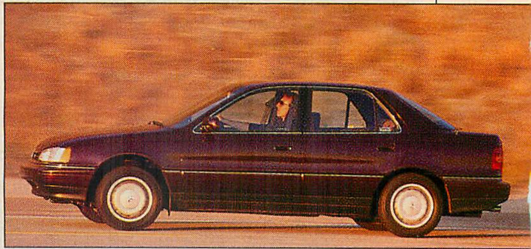
'92 FORD CROWN VICTORIA LX

This long-term Crown Victoria made the journey from our Detroit office courtesy of long-drone driving expert Bob Nagy. In his travels, he noted that the ride quality was good, and overall the Crown Vic was a pleasant cross-country vehicle. His only complaint: seating comfort. "The lower cushion gets tough on the tush after 8 to 10 hours." The staff agrees, and adds that the lumbar support is located a bit too high in the seatback. Other than these minor gripes, the car is well liked and, as you can see from the mileage, constantly in demand.

Base price	$19,543
Price as tested	$24,767
Total mileage	7,597
Test mileage	7,583
Fuel consumed	384 gal
Fuel cost	$490.92
Average mpg	19.8
Additional oil/cost	1 quart/$2.25
Routine maint.	$177.10
Additional maint.	None
Previous maintenance	None
Problem areas	None
Total operating cost	$670.27
Oper. cost/mile	8.8¢

'92 HYUNDAI ELANTRA GLS

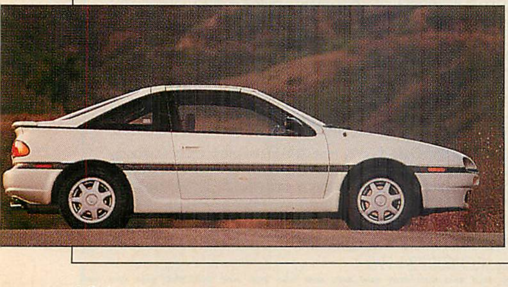
Hyundai, yes, Hyundai, has been welcomed to our long-term gaggle. The GLS is the Korean company's fourth model, and they're getting better every time. Packing a Mitsubishi-designed 1.6-liter inline four-cylinder engine mated to the standard five-speed manual transmission, the sharply styled Elantra has ample power for day-to-day running around or cross-country hauls. In a market with good, solid products (Toyota Corolla, Mazda Protegé, Honda Civic), Hyundai is in for a tough go. We'll keep you posted as to how well this ambitious newcomer competes.



Base price	$9999
Price as tested	$11,770
Total mileage	2550
Test mileage	176
Fuel consumed	8.0 gal
Fuel cost	$10.40
Average mpg	22.0
Additional oil/cost	None
Routine maintenance	None
Additional maintenance	None
Problem areas	None
Total operating cost	$10.40
Operating cost per mile	5.9¢

'91 NISSAN NX2000

At this time of year, our long-term fleet is a little neglected due to our three "Of the Year" programs, so there's nothing too drastic to report since the last update on our long-term NX. The average mpg is down about 2.9 miles, which is a certain indicator of heavier throttle use. But this is a condition we expect to become a regular pattern in the 140-horsepower, nimble Nissan. And why not? This junior rocket scoots to 60 mph in less than 8 seconds and negotiates the slalom cones at close to 70 mph, so it enjoys spirited runs. Watch for a serious increase in mileage in our next report.

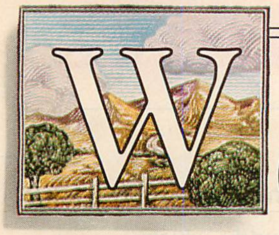


Base price	$12,970
Price as tested	$15,420
Total mileage	2217
Test mileage	1800
Fuel consumed	78.9 gal
Fuel cost	$109.14
Average mpg	22.8
Additional oil/cost	None
Routine maintenance	None
Additional maint.	None
Previous maintenance	None
Problem areas	None
Total operating cost	$109.14
Oper. cost/mile	6.1¢

'92 PONTIAC BONNEVILLE SSEi

Now appearing on the *Motor Trend* long-term Hit Parade is the Pontiac Bonneville SSEi. Not only has Pontiac's flagship received all new sheetmetal, but the interior and standard features have been revamped. The SSEi sports a 205-horsepower supercharged engine, dual exhausts, FE2 sport suspension, and traction control, along with dual airbags and anti-lock brakes. The technological list is impressive and the styling fresh. We're looking forward to our long-term relationship with the Bonneville. For more information, see the Bonneville in the Car of the Year section in this issue.

Base price	$28,045
Price as tested	$29,605
Total mileage	714
Test mileage	513
Fuel consumed	23.02 gal
Fuel cost	$31.08
Average mpg	22.3
Additional oil/cost	None
Routine maintenance	None
Additional maint.	None
Previous maintenance	None
Problem areas	None
Total operating cost	$31.08
Oper. cost/mile	6.1¢



We were cruisin' Highway 34 when Lenny said, "Take the left fork." "Why?" I asked. Lenny's answer,

"Why not?" My husband the navigator. The kids spotted icicles on the shady side of the rocks. More advice from Lenny: "Take the trail between those two big boulders." I was dubious. But Lenny repeated, "Why not?" adding, "the Sidekick® is built to go just about anywhere." So off we went. Four wheelin' uphill. Plenty of power from its 16-valve engine. Lenny was in all his glory. "Go left." An old Doobie Brothers cassette played. A deer bounded by just to our right. I checked the mirror to see if the kids saw her, but they were asleep. "This Sidekick is almost too comfortable," I whispered. Lenny winked at me and said, "Pull over under that tree." I smiled and answered, "Why not?"

THE 4-DR. SIDEKICK 4x4. It has a new, more powerful, 16-valve engine. A new, optional 4-speed electronically-controlled, automatic transmission with lock-up and overdrive. Standard rear anti-lock brake system.[1] Plus, the best gas mileage and one of the lowest sticker prices of any 4-dr. 4x4. So drive it. And live your own adventure. For your nearest Suzuki dealer call 1-800-447-4700.

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[1] The rear-wheel anti-lock brake system operates in two-wheel drive mode only.
[2] Manufacturer's suggested retail price. Taxes, title, freight, and license extra. Dealers set own price.
[3] EPA-estimated MPG w/5-sp manual transmission. This vehicle handles differently from ordinary passenger cars. Federal law cautions to avoid sharp turns and abrupt maneuvers. Always wear your seat belt. For specific details, please read your Owner's Manual. Please *Tread Lightly* on public and private land.

CAR CARE

BY RIK PAUL

MORE POWER TO YOU

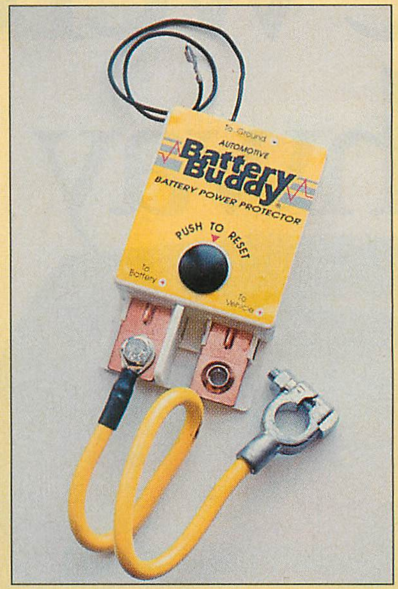
There are few things worse than returning to your car after a movie or shopping and finding the battery dead because you inadvertently left on the dome light or headlights. Or just having a mysterious electrical drain that repeatedly kills the battery at the most inopportune times.

The Battery Buddy, from Dycrest Automotive (40 Corporate Dr., Auburn Hills, MI 48326; 800/421-7774 or 313/332-9393), is a new computerized switch designed to prevent these types of situations. Battery Buddy is wired inline to the positive terminal and constantly monitors both the battery's rate of discharge and outside temperature. If it detects a drain situation, it will automatically disconnect the battery electrically to prevent further drain and ensure there's enough power left for starting.

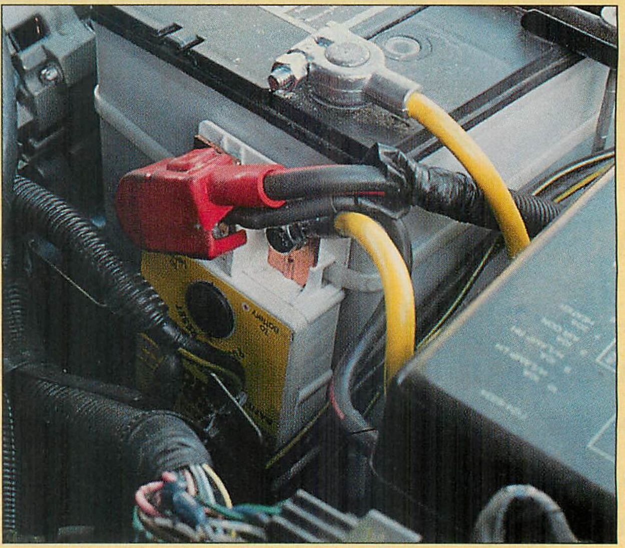
The Battery Buddy is also smart. Heavy drains, such as headlights being left on while the engine is off or a short circuit, are switched off relatively quickly, while slower drains are switched off after a longer period of time. This allows you the luxury of listening to your radio awhile, or at least until Battery Buddy judges that the battery charge is becoming too low. In addition, if a car is stored, the Buddy will switch off power after about three weeks to prevent battery discharge due to the small but constant parasitic loss from clocks or onboard electronics.

The Buddy won't switch off the battery while the engine is running or while hazard lights are operating. Plus, if the battery is switched off, you simply press the black button on the front of the unit, which gives you a three-minute window in which to start your engine before it switches off again.

It took about 45 minutes to install Battery Buddy on an Isuzu Rodeo, using only a couple wrenches and a pair of scissors. Then we tested it by intentionally leaving the headlights on while it was parked. The Buddy did exactly what it was supposed to do. The down side? The unit must be located within reach of the positive cable, which, on the Rodeo, limited where we could mount it. Cable extensions are available from the company, however. Plus, if it switches the battery off, you'll have to reset your clock, all your radio station presets, and any other information held in electronic memory. But that's certainly easier than finding somebody to give you a jump or calling a tow truck. Battery Buddy retails for $59.99.



The Battery Buddy, which connects to the battery's positive terminal, automatically shuts off power if a drain is detected to prevent the battery from going dead.



FROM THE MAILBOX

As a specialist in the automotive electrical field, I would have to say the Car Care column "Warming Up to Winter" in the Oct. '91 issue had a couple incorrect suggestions. First, your cure for corrosion to "coat the battery terminals with petroleum jelly or grease to prevent future corrosion" isn't a good idea. In today's smaller engine compartments where temperatures can get pretty hot, petroleum jelly or grease can seep between the battery terminal and cable terminal, causing a bad connection. A better way is to use chemically treated anti-corrosion pads or spray. Another method is to install a pair of brass "Pro-Start" battery terminals.

The other suggestion was about the window on top of maintenance-free batteries. That window only tells the condition of one of the battery's six cells. You said to "charge the battery" if the window indicates that the battery isn't fully charged. If the cell the window's in is a dead cell and the rest are good, the window may show a low charge state. Attempting to charge a battery with a dead cell may cause the battery to explode.

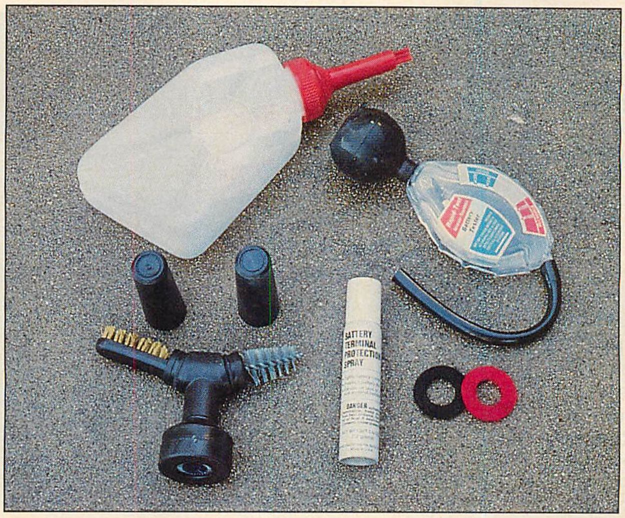
Quite a few places offer free electrical checks. Take advantage of them.

Todd Colvin,
Vancouver, Wash.

Coating battery terminals with grease has been a popular method of preventing corrosion for years. But your point about today's higher engine compartment temperatures is well taken.

As for the state-of-charge indicator or window on maintenance-free batteries, it's true the window actually shows the state of only one of the battery's six cells. To put a separate window on every cell would be expensive, and since all six cells usually rise or fall together, battery manufacturers use the one window to indicate the condition of the whole battery. This is also why owner's manuals recommend charging the battery

BATTERY CARE: STAYING CHARGED UP



For about $12, you can pick up a terminal and cable steel brush combo, anti-corrosion spray and terminal pads, an electrolyte tester, and a water bottle with automatic shutoff to prevent overfilling.

Whether you've got a sleek, three-foot-high Italian exotic that's a major contributor to the U.S. trade deficit or a simple point-A-to-point-B commuter that your budding career depends on, all the action begins with your battery. In today's low-maintenance cars, the battery is probably a source of more car trouble over the years than any component other than the tires.

Batteries usually respond to abuse and neglect by leaving you out in the cold when you can least afford it. Likewise, they reward attention and care with reliability and a long service life. Here are some tips on how to stay on the good side of your battery and what to do if it acts up.

- Batteries give off hydrogen gas, which is flammable and explosive. Never smoke or use open flame near a battery. And avoid electrical sparks. It's also a good idea to wear eye protection when working around batteries.
- Cleanliness counts. Dirt buildup and moisture on a top-post battery can create a small but constant drain. That's why it's important to keep the plastic case clean. More cautious types even wax the top of the battery, so water will bead and not cling to the case.
- Vibration and bumping can gradually cause physical damage to the plates inside by knocking the active material out of supporting gridwork, which eventually causes a short in the cell. Therefore, be sure the battery is securely clamped down so it can't rattle or move around.
- One of the most common reasons for a top-post battery to go dead is low water level. If a battery is low on fluid, fill it to its proper level with distilled water (preferably) or clean drinking water. Fill each cell just until the water reaches the bottom of the filler tube.
- Don't overfill your battery with water, as the normal bubbling that occurs during operation will cause acid to overflow, corroding the terminals, clamps, and surrounding metal parts.
- Another major cause of battery failure is overcharging. If the battery constantly needs water, this could be an indication of the charging system producing too high a voltage. Have it checked out.
- Any time you disconnect the battery, always do the negative cable first. If you try to disconnect the positive cable first, your wrench will be "hot" and will cause sparks if it contacts any other metal part of the car. By disconnecting the negative cable, you isolate the battery from the car's engine and chassis.
- It's conventional wisdom to remove the filler caps when charging a battery. However, this actually increases the fire hazard by exposing more gas to the air. Filler caps are designed to allow venting of gas during normal slow charging.
- When jumping a dead battery from another car, use the following order:

1. Connect one end of the red cable to the positive terminal of the dead battery.
2. Connect the other end of the red cable to the positive terminal of the live battery.
3. Connect one end of the black cable to the negative terminal of the live battery.
4. Connect the other end of the black cable to the dead car on a clean, unpainted spot on the engine block or metal bracket as far as possible from the battery. This connection often causes sparks, which should be kept away from the battery.

- It can be a pain to jump a battery with side terminals using conventional jumper cables. To make it easier, replace your stock terminal bolts with side terminal extensions, which give your jumper cables something to bite onto. The best kind have red and black plastic caps over the extended ends, which can be removed when needed.
- A buildup of acid corrosion on the terminals or surrounding metal surfaces (identifiable as white flaky material) can be cleaned with a mixture of water and baking soda, which neutralizes the battery acid. Finish by rinsing with a hose.
- If acid corrosion in the area is a problem, a product called the Battery Mat, designed to be placed under the battery, absorbs and neutralizes the acid, keeping it from deteriorating the shelf and surrounding area. The mat is available for $3.99 from The Battery Mat, P.O. Box 3601, Winchester, VA 22601; 800/392-1888.

when the window indicates a low-charge state, as we also recommended.

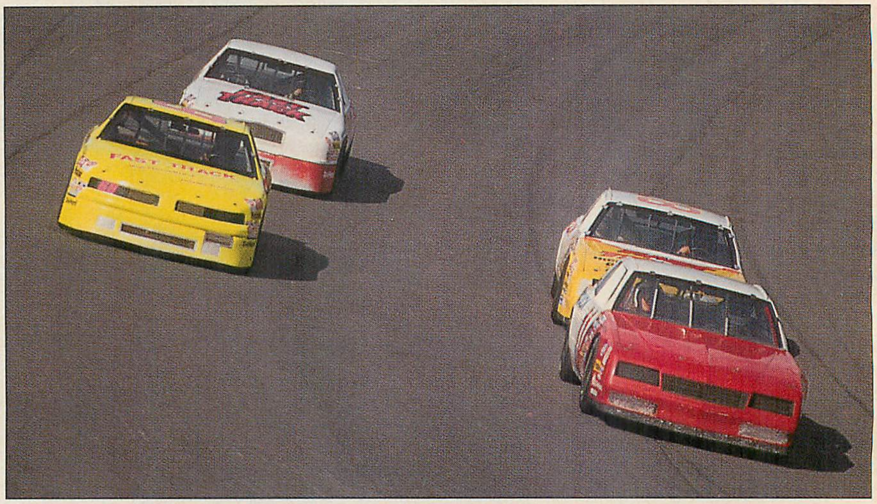
It's also true the window can occasionally give an incorrect reading, whether because the indicator is broken, the hydrometer ball that changes the window's color is stuck in one position, or, as you mentioned, the cell goes dead. One way to check if the indicator is functioning properly is to tilt the battery gently and watch for the green ball to move around inside. Also, since home chargers taper off current as the battery charges, if you notice the current level is low on the charger's needle gauge, and the battery's window is still dark or clear (indicating a low-charge state), you know something is wrong with the battery and it should be replaced.

However, according to Delco-Remy, it's highly unlikely proper charging could cause an explosion in any of these cases. First, if a cell is shorted, most home battery chargers have built-in short protectors that will shut it off once detected. Second, with an automatic charger or properly attended manual charger, there's no harm in connecting it to a fully charged battery, even if the window indicates otherwise. Of course, any time you're charging a battery, feel the case periodically. If it's warm, something is wrong and the charger should be disconnected.

More important, a maintenance-free battery that's low on water could have a high concentration of gas inside, which a spark or flame could ignite. Some batteries indicate this with a low fluid level mark on the case. In others, if the electrolyte level drops below the internal hydrometer, the window will turn yellow. In either case, the battery shouldn't be charged or jumped, but replaced with a new one. Also, in a worst-case scenerio, an unattended manual charger could be accidentally left on the battery so long that it heats up the battery and evaporates enough water inside to lower the electrolyte level to below the internal plates. This situation can produce an internal spark, which would cause the battery to explode. This can occur to any battery, defective or not.

BY MAC DEMERE

FAST TRACK HIGH: CLASS BEGINS AT 160 MPH



Fast Track may be the only driving school where students practice wheel-to-wheel racing in a beginner's program. The school also offers advanced courses.

Before noon of the school's second day, we were running laps averaging more than 150 mph. Nose-to-tail, not quite flat out, drafting through Atlanta Motor Speedway's three-story-high banked turns in honest-to-goodness NASCAR Winston Cup stock cars.

Don't be fooled by its accelerated curriculum, the upstart Fast Track High Performance Driving School is far more than an ultimate E-ticket amusement park ride. Before our class began, there were several signs Fast Track would be a no-nonsense, hardcore superspeedway *racing* school. Perhaps the best indication: The class was liberally sprinkled with experienced racers, including American Speed Association '91 Rookie of the Year Tim Fedewa and NASCAR Southwest Tour competitor Steve Portenga.

Other evidence: the cars. Fast Track's school cars are actual veterans of superspeedway wars. One, a Monte Carlo, won the '85 Firecracker 500. Others have Thunderbird, Regal, Cutlass, and Grand Prix bodies over front-steer and the out-of-fashion rear-steer chassis from Laughlin, Banjo Matthews, Hutcherson-Pagan, and others. There's even a V-6-powered Busch Grand National car, retired early from competition with, uh, rules interpretation problems. Though Winston Cup-legal, engines are a couple hundred horsepower down from the 700-horsepower grenades used for Winston Cup qualifying. However, they're slightly stronger than the restrictor-plate motors used at Daytona and Talladega. If you've never run a superspeedway, you won't notice the missing ponies.

True to its name, everything at Fast Track is done rapidly. After chief instructor Andy Hillenburg—a short-track veteran and current Winston Cup competitor—speeds through the basics in the classroom, there's a quick check-out of the controls in a Winston Cup cockpit. Then it's time for a brisk walk around the track, complete with lectures on the intricacies of driving a stock car. Many of those pointers deal with smoothness. "Don't do anything erratic on a superspeedway," says Hillenburg. At Atlanta, Turns One and Three require a slight deceleration, properly accomplished by turning down toward the bottom of the 24-degree banking then making a *lonnng, slooow* lift of the accelerator. "If you jump off the gas, the car gets wormy," says Hillenburg. Though not in the SAE Dictionary of Automotive Engineering, "wormy" isn't a pleasant image, especially if you're running 160 at the end of the Atlanta straights.

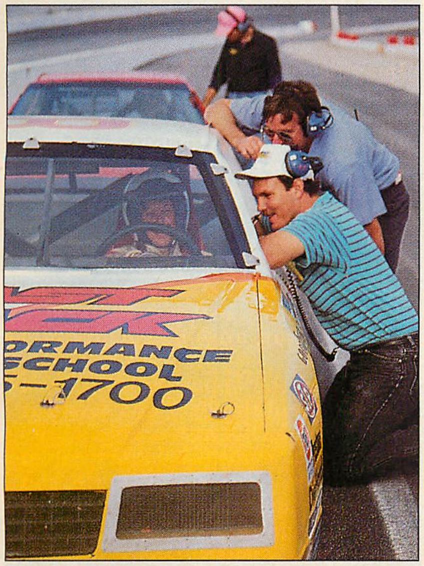
Hillenburg allows students to progress at their own rate. Drivers who faithfully execute his instructions soon find themselves running about as fast as the old steeds will go. The less experienced—or less dauntless—can move more cautiously up the ladder. "The goal is to teach good habits," says Hillenburg. "Consistency must come before speed." Egged on by drafting partner Portenga, our fastest lap was a 154. That's about 10 mph away from qualifying for the ARCA race that ran a month later at Atlanta. (Fellow student Fedewa ran that event for older Winston Cup cars, scoring an impressive top-10 finish in his first superspeedway race.)

Blasting through superspeedway turns compares to little, except for those who make a living driving military aircraft. Even the most violent roller coaster compares poorly, largely because it doesn't need your exacting input to stay on the track. One insight: Imagine a corner so tight you must look through the driver-side window in order to aim the car through the turn. Now picture doing the same thing at 140, your right foot to the floor and the front tires starting to lose traction.

Unlike virtually every other racing school, most of the Fast Track curriculum is devoted to teaching wheel-to-wheel combat and survival skills. After getting comfortable running inches away from a concrete wall, students learn how to tailgate—and be tailgated—at more than twice the highest U.S. speed limit. Next comes a drafting exercise, a lot like playing leapfrog at 150 mph. (It's impressive how the air wake of the passing car tosses around the car being passed.)

The next drill is like Blue Angels on Wheels. It requires running several complete laps in a four-car pack—two abreast and two deep. That's a quartet of 3700-pound cars in four mall-size parking spots going faster than most Americans have ever driven.

The final exercise is a mock pit stop. It's not as easy as it seems, mainly because speeds top 110 even when headed toward the pits. So uninterrupted concentration is another critical component of superspeedway racing. "The checkered flag just means the session is over," says Hillenburg. "The driver's job isn't done until he's out of the car, sitting on the pit wall." A pit-stop tip: Check to see if your brakes are home before your crewman steps over the



Chief instructor and Winston Cup competitor Andy Hillenburg offers tips on running at 150 mph around Atlanta Motor Speedway's three-story-tall banking.

wall, especially if he's bigger than you. "Pit road is not to the place to discover you're out of brakes."

A chassis setup lecture fills one morning. Though packed with great information, unless you're actively campaigning a stock car, most of it will go over your head like an F-15 Eagle on a low-level afterburner pass.

All these drills add up to an incredible amount of track time. For the $1800 price of the Basic Oval Course, it's likely Fast Track pumps more at-speed miles into three days than any other racing school. It helps that students are covering those miles at such a prodigious pace.

Another difference from many other schools: Fast Track doesn't charge students who damage cars. "We can usually spot those about to get into trouble before something really bad happens," says Hillenburg.

Now entering its fourth season, Fast Track will soon expand from the mile-and-a-half Atlanta and Charlotte Motor Speedways to the one-mile Dover Downs and Phoenix ovals. Another new twist: Fast Track has added a pit crew school. For $500, potential crewmen can learn the basics of everything from chassis setup to the all-important pit-stop preparation of gluing lugnuts onto wheels.

About the only thing Hillenburg and crew didn't teach was how to speak to pit-road reporters. But after a few 150-mph laps, you can't help drawling, "The Fast Track Oldsmobile run real good."

For more information, contact Fast Track High Performance Driving School, P.O. Box 160, 5243-B Morehead Road, Harrisburg, NC 28075-0160; 704/455-1700.

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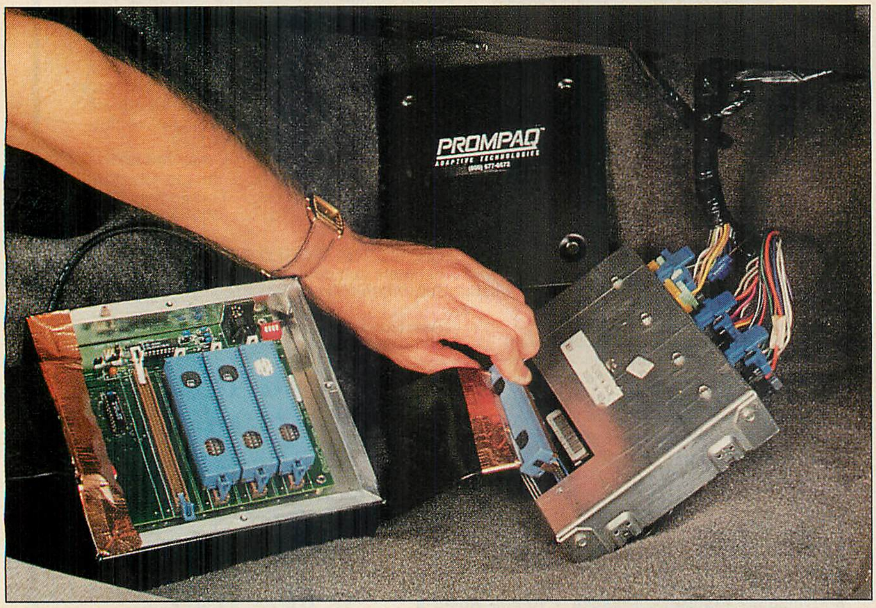
ELECTRICKERY

BY RON COGAN

QUICK SWITCH TO HIGH PERFORMANCE



Changing engine management instructions is now as easy as flicking a switch. Prompaq allows remote switching between computer chips to instantly modify ignition and injection for economy or performance.

There are times when extra horsepower would come in handy, but in this age of emissions control systems and laws governing engine modifications, what's a speed-sensitive guy to do? Generally, we play it straight and we play it stock. It isn't the free-wheeling, parts-swapping '60s any longer.

Still, over the years, performance buffs have found innovative ways to eke extra power from their cars. One of the more interesting methods is tweaking an onboard computer with replacement EPROM (Erasable, Programmable, Read Only Memory) chips. Available from a variety of manufacturers, these chips supply the instructions for engine management—spark timing, fuel injection, and so on—that directly affect performance and economy.

An EPROM swap isn't generally difficult, requiring access to the electronic control module usually located behind a kick panel, beneath the dash, or secreted away in some other obscure spot in an interior. Chips generally plug in, offering an approach straightforward enough to be handled by a do-it-yourselfer or his mechanic.

A new dimension to the chip switch is provided by a unique device called the Prompaq from Adaptive Technologies (127 North Ventura Road, Port Hueneme, CA 93041; 805/488-8832). Instead of the power supplied by a singular chip replacement, Prompaq gives you choices—lots of them. This remote switching device connects to your ECM and mounts within easy reach at the dash, allowing you to select from four different chips with the flick of a key switch while you drive.

Key position determines which chip—with its own unique spark and fuel system management instructions—is on line. You might leave the stock chip in the number one position for everyday driving, an economy chip in the next slot, and a performance chip in number three for highway hot laps. The fourth position is best utilized when outfitted with Prompaq's security chip, which disables the car's fuel and ignition systems to prevent theft. Prompaq's fifth position is reserved for a "limp home" function in the event of an unexpected and total EPROM crash.

Other choices are available. Chips for high-altitude driving and towing are there for the asking. You can even install a chip that limits rpm, perfect for those times when valet-parking your high-rev, high-buck sports car. And if you don't have the strength to turn a key while driving, you can add an auto switch accessory that switches programs automatically by sensing throttle position or a variety of other specified conditions.

Four Prompaq models are available for a variety of GM vehicles, as well as Porsches, BMWs, and Nissans. A Honda unit is being developed and models for other marques are in the works. Prompaqs range from $200 to $300, depending on your vehicle. Automatic activation adds another $100.

ACTIVE SEATING

Imagine sitting in the driver's seat and being isolated from the bumps and grinds of a badly rutted road. Impossible? Maybe not for long. Delta Kogyo Company, Ltd., of Hiroshima, Japan, is working on a high-tech car seat that uses electronic sensing and opposing magnetic forces to counteract road shocks transmitted to car occupants. The company's seat is actually suspended atop an electromagnetic field.

We had the opportunity to try a developmental model and found it interesting. This just might find its way into a high-tech luxury car in the future. But wait: Could you imagine combining this with extremely high-rate active suspension and active steering (Dec. '91) with steer-by-wire technology? You could be (shudder) as isolated from the traveling experience as an airline passenger in coach. Cost and magnet weight are current obstacles to production.

CURRENTS

•Let the Good Times (Rock 'n') Roll: Motorcycle manufacturer Kawasaki is jumping into the autosound arena. The Kawasaki Mobile Electronics product line will include AM/FM/cassette decks with CD inputs, speakers, and integrated equalizer/amplifiers. And, yes, the company will market stereos for motorcycles in the near future.

•DCC Comes to Market: Technics plans to start advertising a new digital compact cassette deck in May. Portable and home units will hit the market first, followed by an auto DCC unit within several months.

•Slipped Discs: Here's a new twist that should play well with auto compact disc fans. Alpine recently displayed an in-dash three-disc CD changer at the Tokyo Audio Fair, possibly signaling a completely new approach to configuring auto compact disc systems.

•FAX in the Box: Toyota puts a whole new spin on the phrase, "You really send me!" The auto maker has developed a mobile FAX machine that fits neatly within a glovebox, providing the ultimate accompaniment to your cellular phone.

ROAD TEST REVIEW

Model (*auto. trans.)	Year	Issue	0-60 (sec)	1/4 Mile (sec)	1/4 Mile (mph)	Brake 60-0 (ft)	Lat. Accel. (g)	Slal. (mph)	EPA City (mpg)
Acura Integra GS	'90	3/90	8.9	16.6	83.4	122	.83	64.6	24
Acura Legend Coupe *	'91	8/91	8.5	16.3	88.8	124	.86	65.1	19
Acura Legend Sedan *	'91	7/91	8.3	16.2	89.6	135	.83	61.3	19
Acura NSX *	'91	8/91	5.8	14.4	99.3	119	.90	68.6	18
Acura Vigor GS	'92	11/91	8.8	16.7	84.7	131	.79	64.5	20
Alfa Romeo Spider	'91	5/91	10.8	17.6	79.8	148	.86	59.0	22
Alfa Romeo 164L	'91	3/91	7.7	16.1	89.7	124	.81	64.3	18
Audi Coupe Quattro	'90	1/91	8.8	16.5	84.7	139	.81	60.2	18
Audi V8	'91	5/91	6.8	15.1	89.8	135	.80	59.1	14
Audi 200 Quattro Wagon	'91	2/91	7.7	15.7	88.1	131	.85	64.4	18
Bentley Turbo R *	'90	8/91	7.8	15.8	91.8	120	.73	57.6	10
BMW M5	'91	5/91	6.5	14.9	97.5	120	.81	66.5	11
BMW 318is	'90	9/90	8.8	16.5	84.0	117	.87	63.2	22
BMW 325i	'92	11/91	7.8	15.8	89.2	126	.85	63.9	18
BMW 525i	'91	4/91	8.4	16.2	88.4	134	.83	60.7	17
BMW 750iL *	'91	5/91	8.1	16.0	91.8	122	.73	57.7	12
BMW 850i *	'91	8/91	7.4	15.6	92.5	125	.84	63.0	12
Buick LeSabre Limited *	'92	7/91	10.0	17.5	80.0	160	.78	60.1	18
Buick Park Avenue Ultra *	'91	2/91	9.6	17.1	81.7	128	.79	63.0	18
Buick Reatta Convertible *	'90	2/90	9.8	17.3	79.9	132	.83	62.8	18
Buick Regal Limited *	'90	2/90	9.1	16.8	83.0	131	.78	60.4	19
Cadillac Allanté	'91	8/91	8.0	16.2	85.4	128	.84	63.8	15
Cadillac Brougham *	'91	12/90	9.4	17.1	80.8	133	.70	49.8	14
Cadillac Eldorado TC *	'92	9/91	8.4	16.2	83.1	153	.76	60.6	16
Cadillac Seville STS *	'92	5/91	8.8	16.7	82.3	128	.82	61.6	16
Callaway T. Turbo Corvette	'91	8/91	4.8	13.0	112.7	108	.94	71.3	9
Chevrolet Beretta GTZ	'91	7/91	7.7	16.1	87.8	141	.86	68.4	22
Chevrolet Blazer	'92	1/92	11.0	17.8	77.4	145	.71	53.5	13
Chevrolet Camaro Z28	'90	9/90	6.5	15.0	95.0	132	.89	63.9	17
Chevrolet Camaro IROC-Z *	'90	3/90	5.8	14.4	97.8	132	.90	64.2	16
Chevrolet Caprice Classic *	'92	12/91	10.3	17.4	78.3	139	.78	59.6	17
Chevrolet Cavalier RS Conv.	'91	6/91	9.2	16.7	82.4	155	.76	64.4	19
Chevrolet Corvette *	'91	8/91	5.7	14.7	99.1	109	.90	65.3	16
Chevrolet Corvette LT1	'92	10/91	5.3	13.7	101.9	122	.86	65.7	16
Chevrolet Corvette ZR-1	'90	4/90	4.4	12.8	113.8	109	.90	68.1	16
Chevrolet Crew Cab *	'92	1/92	11.9	18.5	74.6	172	.73	57.9	
Chevrolet Lumina APV *	'90	4/90	12.2	18.7	73.4	146	.73	55.2	18
Chevrolet Lumina Euro *	'90	5/90	9.9	17.3	79.4	139	.78	61.4	19
Chevrolet Lumina Z34	'91	10/90	7.5	15.8	89.1	153	.79	60.7	
Chevrolet Suburban *	'92	1/92	10.6	17.7	76.7	167	.72	51.7	
Chrysler LeBaron *	'91	6/91	9.6	17.2	80.1	170	.76	61.2	20
Chrysler Imperial *	'90	3/90	11.0	18.1	77.6	153	.68	50.6	17
Consulier GTP LX	'91	7/91	6.3	14.9	91.5	137	.90	64.7	21
Daihatsu Charade SE *	'90	7/90	13.1	19.2	74.5	168	.73	56.7	31
Daihatsu Rocky SE	'90	4/90	13.3	19.2	68.8	150	.77	59.4	23
Dodge Caravan ES *	'91	2/91	11.4	18.3	76.0	135	.75	57.6	18
Dodge Dakota V-8 *	'91	1/91	9.6	17.2	79.8	153	.71	54.5	14
Dodge Daytona ES Limited	'90	4/90	8.9	16.9	81.8	144	.82	61.3	19
Dodge Monaco ES *	'90	6/90	10.3	17.5	81.1	148	.82	61.3	17
Dodge Spirit R/T	'91	6/91	7.3	15.7	90.7	132	.84	60.0	19
Dodge Stealth R/T Turbo	'91	12/90	6.4	14.7	95.3	117	.89	64.5	24
Eagle Premier ES Limited *	'90	5/90	10.6	17.8	80.3	126	.81	60.3	17
Eagle Talon TSi AWD	'90	9/90	6.8	15.1	91.0	136	.83	66.2	22
Ferrari Testarossa	'89	5/89	6.3	14.5	100.7	156	.88		10
Ford Aerostar 4WD *	'90	4/90	9.8	17.4	77.3	155	.70	55.3	16
Ford Chateau Club Wagon *	'92	1/92	10.8	17.9	76.6	165	.68	55.2	11
Ford Crown Victoria LX *	'92	12/91	9.5	17.1	81.6	140	.78	59.2	18
Ford Escort GT	'91	7/91	8.5	16.6	89.4	146	.85	65.3	26
Ford Explorer Eddie Bauer *	'91	9/91	11.8	18.1	75.7	174	.66	55.2	15
Ford F-150 Flareside P/U *	'92	1/92	9.4	17.1	80.4	155	.75	53.7	12
Ford Mustang GT	'91	6/91	7.3	15.6	89.2	144	.87	66.6	17
Ford Probe GT	'90	9/90	8.0	15.8	89.8	124	.82	62.9	21
Ford Taurus LX Wagon *	'92	10/91	10.9	17.9	77.6	150	.73	58.6	
Ford Taurus SHO	'91	6/91	7.7	16.2	85.0	139	.83	62.2	18
Ford Thunderbird SC	'90	9/90	7.4	15.8	90.8	136	.82	62.6	17
Geo Metro LSi Convertible	'91	6/91	13.8	19.2	70.5	150	.77	59.2	40
Geo Prizm GSi	'90	3/90	10.0	17.3	81.6	143	.80	61.8	25
Geo Storm Hatchback	'91	4/91	10.5	17.6	77.9	124	.84	62.5	30
GMC Safari AWD *	'90	4/90	12.6	18.9	71.4	143	.68	54.8	17
GMC Syclone *	'91	1/91	4.9	13.6	98.6	133	.82	62.9	16
GMC Typhoon *	'92	1/92	5.5	14.2	95.5	131	.82	65.7	15
Honda Accord EX	'90	3/90	10.0	17.2	80.2	134	.79	63.3	24
Honda Accord EX Wagon	'91	5/91	9.4	17.0	83.2	136	.81	58.8	22
Honda Civic EX Sedan	'91	4/91	9.7	17.2	81.9	138	.81	63.0	28
Honda Civic Si	'92	12/91	8.5	16.4	86.0	146	.75		29
Honda CRX Si	'91	7/91	8.7	16.5	85.2	145	.85	68.3	28
Honda Prelude Si 4WS	'92	11/91	8.1	16.0	87.8	123	.89		22
Hyundai Excel GLS	'90	3/90	12.5	18.6	73.6	154	.72	56.8	29
Hyundai Scoupe	'91	7/91	11.9	18.4	73.5	146	.84	64.1	26
Hyundai Sonata GLS V-6 *	'90	1/90	10.0	17.5	79.6	133	.81	62.2	18
Infiniti G20	'91	3/91	8.6	16.6	85.8	131	.79	65.4	24
Infiniti M30 *	'90	9/90	10.0	17.4	79.5	133	.79	61.2	19
Infiniti Q45 *	'91	3/91	7.3	15.6	90.4	128	.81	63.2	16
Isuzu Impulse RS	'91	3/91	7.8	15.8	87.4	116	.86	67.0	22
Isuzu Rodeo LS	'91	4/91	12.4	18.5	72.2	159	.69	54.9	15
Isuzu Stylus XS	'91	3/91	9.6	17.0	81.0	136	.84	66.1	25

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ROAD TEST REVIEW

Model	Year	Issue	0-60	1/4 Mile		Brake 60-0	Lat. Accel.	Slal.	EPA City
(*auto. trans.)			(sec)	(sec)	(mph)	(ft)	(g)	(mph)	(mpg)
Jaguar XJ-S Convertible *	'89	12/89	10.3	17.7	83.3	129	.80	61.1	12
Jaguar XJ6 Sovereign *	'90	4/90	9.0	16.8	86.1	127	.75		17
Jeep Cherokee LTD *	'91	9/91	9.8	16.9	79.4	151	.78	59.8	15
Lexus ES 250 *	'90	2/90	10.3	17.7	79.3	137	.77	62.9	19
Lexus ES 300 *	'92	9/91	8.8	16.7	84.6	123	.81	62.6	18
Lexus LS 400 *	'90	3/90	8.1	16.1	89.3	126	.79	59.4	18
Lexus SC 300	'92	1/92	7.8	16.0	89.2	123	.88	65.5	18
Lexus SC 400 *	'92	8/91	6.8	15.1	93.8	116	.88	64.1	18
Lotus Turbo Esprit X-180R	'91	1/92	4.6	13.2	106.2	125	.93	67.6	17
Lincoln Continental *	'90	3/90	11.4	18.4	74.6	150	.75	60.5	18
Lincoln Town Car *	'90	2/90	10.2	17.5	80.0	142	.71	54.3	17
Mazda MX-3 GS	'92	10/91	8.3	16.4	85.0	139	.87	66.0	22
Mazda Miata	'90	7/91	9.1	16.7	82.0	142	.86	67.9	25
Mazda MX-6 GT	'90	9/90	8.0	15.8	90.0	134	.83	62.9	21
Mazda Navajo *	'91	1/91	10.4	17.6	77.2	171	.93	54.6	15
Mazda Protegé LX	'90	3/90	8.9	16.8	82.7	140	.79	61.2	28
Mazda RX-7 Convertible	'91	6/91	8.8	16.7	84.3	134	.86	66.4	17
Mazda 626 GT	'90	7/90	7.8	15.8	89.1	140	.81	62.0	21
Mazda 929 *	'92	11/91	9.3	16.9	83.8	122	.84	60.2	19
Mercedes-Benz 300SE *	'91	5/90	9.2	17.0	84.6	126	.76	59.6	17
Mercedes-Benz 400E *	'92	12/91	7.6	15.8	94.2	119	.77	58.8	15
Mercedes-Benz 500SL *	'91	8/91	6.7	14.9	97.9	119	.80	63.6	14
Mercury Capri XR2	'91	3/91	7.4	15.8	90.4	137	.81	67.9	23
Mercury Cougar XR7 *	'91	4/91	9.4	17.1	82.2	140	.82	63.0	18
Mercury Sable GS *	'90	6/90	10.1	17.5	81.2	156	.81	61.7	20
Mercury Tracer LTS	'91	2/91	8.7	16.7	85.7	159	.78	65.0	26
Mitsubishi Diamante *	'92	7/91	8.9	16.6	87.1	124	.85	63.1	18
Mitsubishi Eclipse GSX	'92	10/91	7.0	15.3	89.2	142	.84	67.1	20
Mitsubishi Expo LRV Sport	'92	1/92	10.5	17.6	78.1	145	.71	61.1	23
Mitsubishi Galant VR-4	'91	2/91	7.3	15.6	89.1	130	.80	64.9	19
Mitsubish Montero *	'92	1/92	12.8	19.0	72.4	145	.70	55.8	15
Mitsubishi 3000GT SL *	'91	8/91	8.5	16.4	87.9	121	.92	67.4	18
Nissan Axxess	'89	4/89	10.9	17.9	76.0	133	.72		20
Nissan Maxima SE	'92	10/91	7.6	15.9	89.4	122	.82	63.3	
Nissan NX 2000	'91	7/91	7.8	16.1	86.0	128	.88	69.0	23
Nissan Pathfinder	'90	4/90	11.7	18.3	75.7	157	.73	54.9	15
Nissan Sentra GXE	'91	4/91	9.6	17.2	80.4	148	.77	63.2	29
Nissan Stanza GXE	'90	3/90	9.0	16.8	82.3	128	.79	61.5	22
Nissan 240SX SE	'91	7/91	7.9	16.1	86.3	143	.84	66.5	22
Nissan 300ZX Turbo *	'91	8/91	7.0	15.4	91.1	120	.88	68.5	18
Nissan 300ZX 2+2	'91	6/91	7.5	15.9	89.5	124	.88	64.6	18
Oldsmobile Bravada *	'91	9/91	12.1	18.5	73.4	171	.69	57.7	17
Oldsmobile Custom Cruiser *	'91	2/91	10.8	17.9	77.4	131	.74	57.6	16
Oldsmobile Cutlass Suprm. *	'90	6/90	9.9	17.3	78.8	159	.75	59.4	19
Oldsmobile Cutlass Calais	'90	9/90	7.7	16.1	88.2	136	.84	66.4	22
Oldsmobile Ninety Eight *	'91	2/91	9.7	17.2	81.1	130	.80	62.7	18
Oldsmobile Silhouette *	'90	6/90	11.6	18.4	74.9	145	.78	55.4	18
Oldsmobile Troféo *	'90	7/90	9.7	17.1	80.9	129	.84	63.9	18
Plymouth Acclaim	'92	1/92	11.2	17.9	77.2	148	.78	59.0	24
Plymouth Grand Voyager *	'91	2/91	12.6	18.9	74.3	133	.71	55.4	17
Plymouth Laser RS	'91	7/91	9.9	17.1	82.5	135	.88	68.5	22
Plymouth Sundance America	'91	9/91	11.7	18.2	74.8	152	.75	62.1	23
Pontiac Firebird T-A Conv.	'91	6/91	7.0	15.4	91.3	136	.92	65.1	16
Pontiac Formula Firehawk	'92	12/91	4.9	13.4	105.2	135	.94	68.3	16
Pontiac Grand Am Quad 4	'90	9/90	7.3	15.8	89.8	148	.84	66.5	22
Pontiac Grand Prix STE *	'91	6/91	8.7	16.5	86.1	135	.82	59.0	17
Pontiac Sunbird Turbo *	'90	9/90	7.8	16.0	86.4	142	.84	65.5	21
Pontiac Trans Sport *	'90	4/90	12.6	18.9	72.7	141	.74	56.4	18
Pontiac Turbo Grand Prix *	'90	2/90	7.7	15.6	87.8	140	.80	61.9	21
Pontiac Trans Am	'91	1/91	4.6	12.7	116.9	156	.85	62.5	20
Porsche Carrera 2 Cabrio *	'91	6/91	6.0	14.4	101.1	119	.87	68.5	16
Porsche Carrera 4	'89	10/89	5.5	13.9	100.4	127	.84	65.8	15
Porsche 911 Turbo	'91	8/91	4.9	13.4	104.1	116	.88	65.5	13
Porsche 928S 4 *	'91	8/91	6.2	14.7	91.1	119	.91	64.3	15
Range Rover County SE *	'91	7/91	11.0	18.2	76.1	136	.72	56.9	13
Range Rover Hunter *	'91	9/91	12.1	18.3	75.4	150	.65	51.8	13
Saab 900S Cabriolet	'91	6/91	10.7	17.7	79.6	126	.85	61.8	20
Saab 9000 Turbo	'91	2/91	6.8	15.2	94.7	130			
Saturn SL2	'91	4/91	8.6	16.5	84.9	145	.82	64.9	24
Sterling 827Si	'90	3/90	8.6	16.4	86.5	120	.81	61.5	19
Subaru Legacy Sport Sedan	'91	2/91	8.5	16.0	84.7	123	.82	64.9	19
Subaru SVX *	'92	9/91	7.7	15.7	90.8	112	.92	67.8	17
Suzuki Sidekick JLX	'921	12/91	12.3	18.6	72.7	148	.70	58.1	24
Suzuki Swift GS *	'90	7/90	11.6	18.4	74.8	157	.76	59.3	30
Toyota Celica All-Trac Turbo	'90	9/90	7.5	15.7	87.2	122	.85	62.6	19
Toyota Celica GT Convertible	'91	6/91	9.8	17.1	81.6	160	.81	63.9	22
Toyota Corolla LE	'91	4/91	10.2	17.5	79.8	147	.71	57.4	28
Toyota MR2 Turbo	'91	3/91	6.8	14.9	94.2	127	.88	66.6	20
Toyota Paseo	'91	7/91	10.0	17.3	80.6	134	.87	66.9	28
Toyota Previa All-Trac *	'90	5/90	13.6	19.5	72.0	137	.73	57.3	17
Toyota Supra Turbo	'91	9/91	7.1	15.6	90.7	123	.89	61.2	17
Toyota Tercel LE	'91	1/91	11.7	18.3	75.5	167	.76	62.0	29
Toyota 4Runner *	'90	4/90	11.3	18.3	75.2	143	.69	54.5	16
Volkswagen Corrado	'90	3/90	9.3	16.8	83.8	126	.83	60.8	21
Volkswagen Jetta GLI 16V	'90	8/90	9.0	16.6	83.2	160	.82	64.1	22
Volkswagen Passat GL	'90	4/90	10.5	17.6	79.8	131	.82	61.3	21
Volvo 740 Turbo Wagon *	'90	8/90	7.8	16.1	85.4	118	.81	61.6	18

INVESTMENTS

BY ROBERT J. GOTTLIEB

EXPOSITIONS

Richie Clyne (Imperial Palace Auto Collection) and Don Williams (Blackhawk Automobile Museum) are America's two sharpest auto purveyors. Together they held the original no-reserve auction in Nevada a few years ago. Having designated it simply "The Auction," they realized there might be a better way to sell cars, especially exotic, expensive models. This led to the creation of the modern day "Exposition" in which the truly exotic cars are displayed in formal luxurious settings, compatible with an atmosphere in which a buyer could make a choice, ask questions, and negotiate a fair price.

The first Exposition was held in conjunction with one of their auctions in Tokyo last year. It was so successful that the dollar volume of sales far exceeded the sales in the auction. The Exposition was recreated later in the year in conjunction with their Las Vegas auction. Gross sales exceeded $20 million. The handwriting was on the wall. As your read this, Williams and Clyne are feverishly working to promote and produce the second annual auction and Exposition in Tokyo (March 21-22). The lowest-priced cars will be shipped to Tokyo for the auction; highest-priced cars will be shipped for display at the Exposition, which adjoins the auction.

The Nevada concept was executed in style. Exposition cars were displayed on carpeting in the huge ballroom of the Aladdin Hotel. In the hotel theater next door, the auction was successful, but with one exception, sales were only in the lower-priced merchandise. The exception was a 250 GTO Ferrari with a well-documented history, which sold for an astounding $5.5 million.

Barrett-Jackson will emulate Clyne and Williams and hold an exposition at its '92 Scottsdale auction. If the Barrett-Jackson Exposition is half as profitable, you can bet other auction companies will jump on the bandwagon. It's easy to predict that Clyne and Williams will test their theory in other American cities when they return from Tokyo. Expect a series of expositions in major cities after March of this year.

Is the exposition concept the beginning of the end for auctions? Absolutely not. For one thing, it'll only work if the promoters have a huge supply of exotic cars to draw from, and Clyne and Williams obviously do. Most auction houses must rely on consignments, and they simply can't and won't find sufficient quality cars for successful expositions. The best they can hope for are extended car corrals similar to the event held in conjunction with the annual Kruse International auctions in Auburn, Indiana.

AUCTIONS DOWN

Many people now view the automobile as a form of art. Truly exotic cars are looked upon as rolling sculpture, and we can't find much fault with that. Art, like beauty, has always been in the eye of the beholder, so it's easy to understand how a Castanga-bodied Isotta Fraschini would be considered more beautiful than anything painted by one of the great artists. Given a choice, many would choose the Isotta over a Monet, Cassat, or Remington bronze.

From an investment standpoint, the choice of the car might be a great mistake. Annual license fees could be horrendous for the car owner, while the art collector pays nothing. Even when properly maintained, cars deteriorate faster than paintings. A common nail or hook secures a storage area for the painting, while a temperature-controlled garage (with sprinklers, of course) is best for the car. Fine art and fine cars appear to rise and fall in value together. There are a few exceptions, but generally, a chart would show nearly parallel lines.

Both art forms are currently mired in deep troughs. Every car auction since January 1990 has been a disappointment. Every art auction since January 1991 has been a disappointment. A couple months ago, Christie's International bombed at a New York auction. Christie's publishes high and low estimates of prices in catalogues printed prior to its auctions. At New York, the lowest expected amount was $51 million and the high range was $80 million. It didn't come close to the lowest estimates by $12 million. Out of 60 lots, 37 percent failed to sell. As in the recent car auctions, the cheaper items sold best, while the more expensive lots went unsold. Another similarity was the absence of strong bidding by European and Japanese buyers.

The compelling question is what will occur in the coming year. Right now, we're hopeful of improvement, which is a far cry from being optimistic. There's little we can foresee in the economy to create any change at this time. If there were a sudden turnaround, it would have to be based on drastic movement resulting from election-year politics. Then the question would be how long it would take for any economic improvement to spill over into the collector-car market.

We do have advice for investors as distinguished from collectors. January is the most dangerous month to speculate on old cars, notwithstanding the famous and popular Scottsdale auctions. The other dangerous months are February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, and December (with sincere apologies to Mark Twain).

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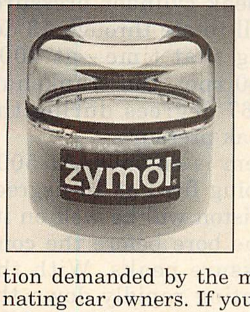

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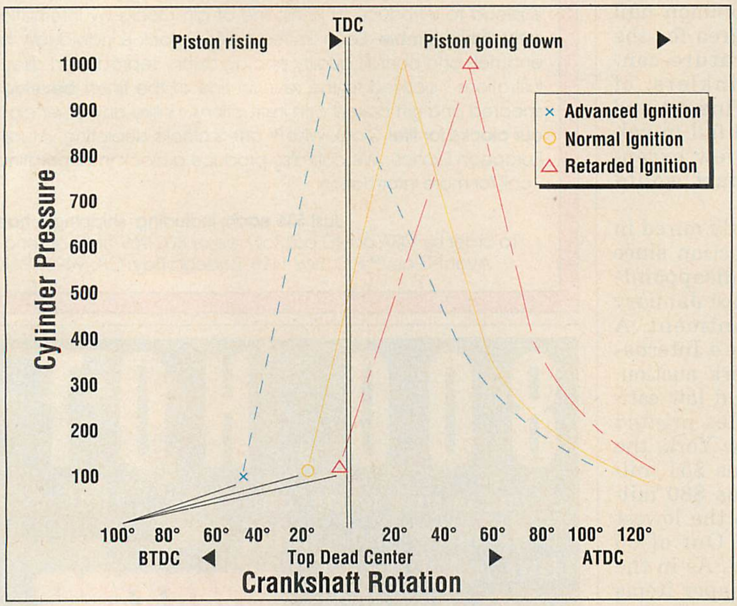
TECHNOLOGUE

BY RON GRABLE

IGNITION TIMING

Automotive literature is full of praise for electronic engine controls and their ability to vary fuel and spark continuously. It's easy enough to visualize the inherent advantages of changing the amount of fuel injected into an engine, but not so easy to understand the need to vary spark timing. Spark (or ignition) timing describes the point at which the spark plug fires to ignite the mixture in the combustion chamber, and is expressed in relation to crankshaft position.



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Life would be simple indeed if ignition of the fuel/air mixture gave an instantaneous bang to the top of the piston. The timing could then be set to fire when the piston was exactly at the top of the compression stroke (top dead center or TDC). In fact, after ignition, a flame front radiates outward from the spark plug in a controlled burn, which is quite different from an uncontrolled explosion. The pressure in the combustion chamber rises quickly to its peak before tapering off rapidly. The burn rate and subsequent pressure rise are primarily a function of time, but also are influenced by the properties of the fuel, turbulence in the combustion chamber, compression ratio, temperature of the incoming fuel/air mixture, and other factors.

The chart shows the relationship between crank position and cylinder pressure. Correct ignition timing must take into account the time delay between ignition and maximum cylinder pressure to place the point of peak pressure at or slightly after TDC. This guarantees maximum downward push on the piston. If the peak pressure point occurs before TDC, the piston is still on its way up on compression stroke, and the force generated from the combustion of the fuel/air mix will be "negative work."

At first glance, the solution seems simple: Fire the plug early to account for the time delay. If the engine speed is 1000 rpm, firing the plug 10 degrees of crankshaft rotation before top dead center (BTDC) will allow cylinder pressures to peak at the desired point slightly after TDC. Ah, if only it were so easy.

At 1000 rpm, each revolution of the crankshaft only takes 0.059 seconds. Therefore the crank rotates through 10 degrees every 0.016 seconds. If we assume it takes 0.002 seconds from ignition to peak cylinder pressure, the crank will rotate through 13 degrees during that time—at 1000 rpm. At 5000 rpm, the crankshaft will rotate 67 degrees during the buildup to peak pressure.

The problem is obvious. At 5000 rpm, if the plug fires at 10 degrees BTDC, the piston will be well on its way down the bore before the combustion pressure peaks. With the piston retreating rapidly down the cylinder, the optimum push won't be realized from combustion.

If ignition is early (prior to TDC), combustion-chamber pressures can get too high, resulting in detonation, which is an uncontrolled condition where ignition simultaneously occurs at several spots in the combustion chamber due to high temperatures or pressure. If detonation occurs, the pressure rise isn't smooth and engine damage can result. The actual noise of detonation is the collision of multiple flame fronts in the combustion chamber.

Obviously, a different ignition timing is needed for each engine speed, but timing is also dependent on engine load, temperatures, and fuel octane. In the days of breaker-point ignitions, designers used centrifugal weights and engine vacuum to advance timing as engine speed increased. Those systems were marginal at best, and were unable to compensate for fuel octane and load.

Modern electronic engine management systems use sensors for throttle position, engine speed, air inlet and engine temperatures, exhaust gas oxygen, and knock detectors to adjust timing many times per second. When demands are low, ignition timing will be configured for maximum economy; when the driver gets his foot into the throttle, the computer selects timing for max power, all the while monitoring the knock sensor. Engineers determine the correct ignition settings on engine dynamometers for the entire range of expected conditions, then enter them into the computer memory in the form of algorithms. At any instant in time, the computer looks up the correct ignition timing based on existing conditions.

These modern electronic systems are responsible for increased performance, improved fuel efficiency, and reliabilities inconceivable 20 years ago. Can you imagine what automotive electronic controls will be like 20 years from now? **MT**

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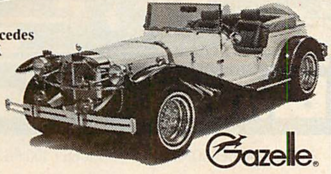

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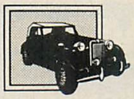

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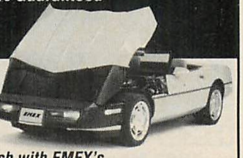

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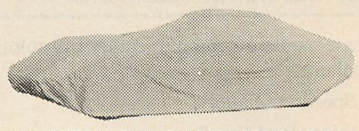

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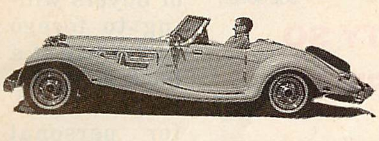

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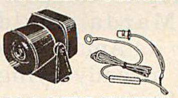

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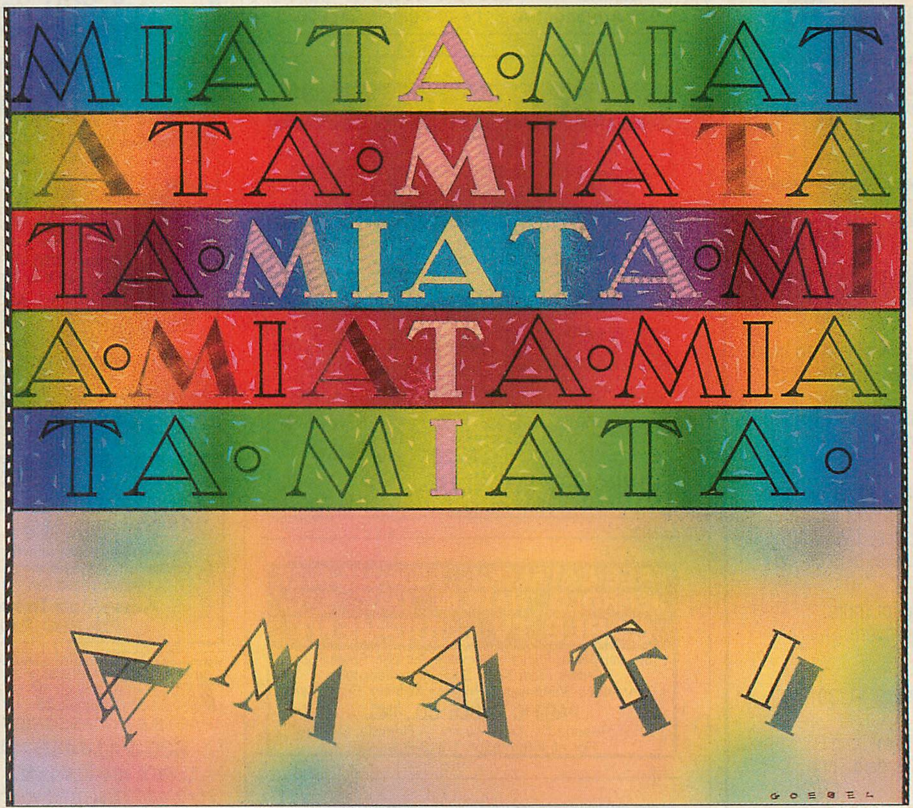
STREETWISE

BY MARYANN N. KELLER

AMATI: WHAT'S IN A NAME?

To much fanfare, Mazda announced it would join the ranks of luxury car builders in 1994 with its new brand, Amati. It doesn't take long to figure out that Amati is an anagram of Miata, Mazda's popular small sporty car. But Amati's management insists this is merely coincidental. Amati was chosen after reviewing countless hundreds of computer-generated names that had no specific meaning. It was selected, in all likelihood, because of its sound and its meanings. Amati is a form of the Latin verb to love, and it's the name of one of Italy's most famous violin makers who predated Stradivarius—romantic and classic, you might say. It's also associated with Europe in a way that Lexus, Acura, and Infiniti aren't.



JOE GOEBEL

AMATI'S TASK IS TO CREATE AN IDENTITY SO DISTINCTIVE IT JUSTIFIES A PREMIUM PRICE

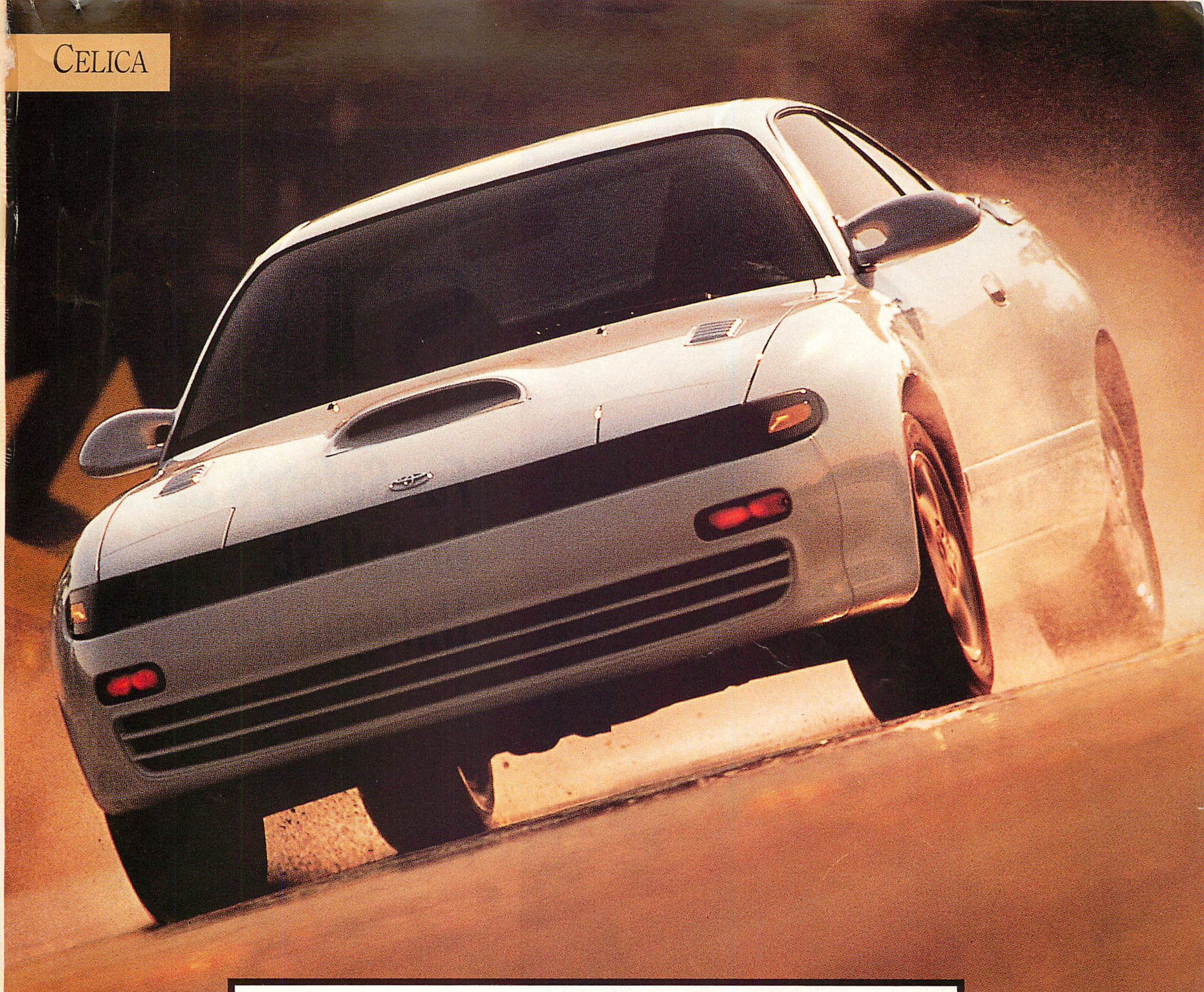
Mazda's decision set off much debate about whether the luxury market had room for another competitor and just how Mazda would create an identity for its Amati cars different from those already vying for the checkbooks of upper income households.

Little is known about the cars Amati will sell except that there'll be two four-door sedans when the brand is launched. Amati intends to market its cars through exclusive dealers located in key metropolitan areas with annual volume targeted at 20,000 or so, a relatively small number compared to Lexus, Infiniti, or Acura, which by 1994 could be selling three to five times that amount. Perhaps Amati hopes the other Japanese brands will be too common to be exclusive.

The last two years have proven that Americans were willing to ignore the long pedigrees of brands like Mercedes-Benz, BMW, and Jaguar and give the lower-priced newcomers a chance. But by 1994, Acura, Lexus, and Infiniti will be well-established veterans with broader product lines than they have today.

Amati's task will be to create an identity for itself so distinctive that it justifies a premium price. The name may give a clue as to the direction Amati cars and image will take. We wouldn't expect the cars to do 0-60 in 5 seconds, and we wouldn't expect them to be styled after Mercedes or BMW. More likely, Amati will meet acceptable performance, technical, and safety standards and use styling—exterior and interior—to differentiate the brand. Mazda's been creative and clever in the use of style for that purpose, having already had one success that tapped into our memory of classic models. The Miata was pointedly meant for us to recall old MGs, Triumphs, Sunbeams, and Austin-Healeys. As a modern version of an old British sports car, the Miata was a car to fall in love with. It was never meant to sell in large volume, but rather to a limited number of buyers willing to forego the utility of a back seat and larger trunk for personal transportation. With a name like Amati, Mazda will probably draw upon the graceful lines of Jaguar, Rolls-Royce, or Aston Martin to create a similar personal response as the Miata had with its target audience. Ask any Jaguar owner about his car, and the first thing he talks about are the car's lines and shape, whereas the owner of a BMW or Mercedes extols power and handling.

The presence of more Japanese companies in the luxury segment will make things tougher for the veteran builders of these cars. But for the public, more competition always means more variety, better cars, and higher value. MT



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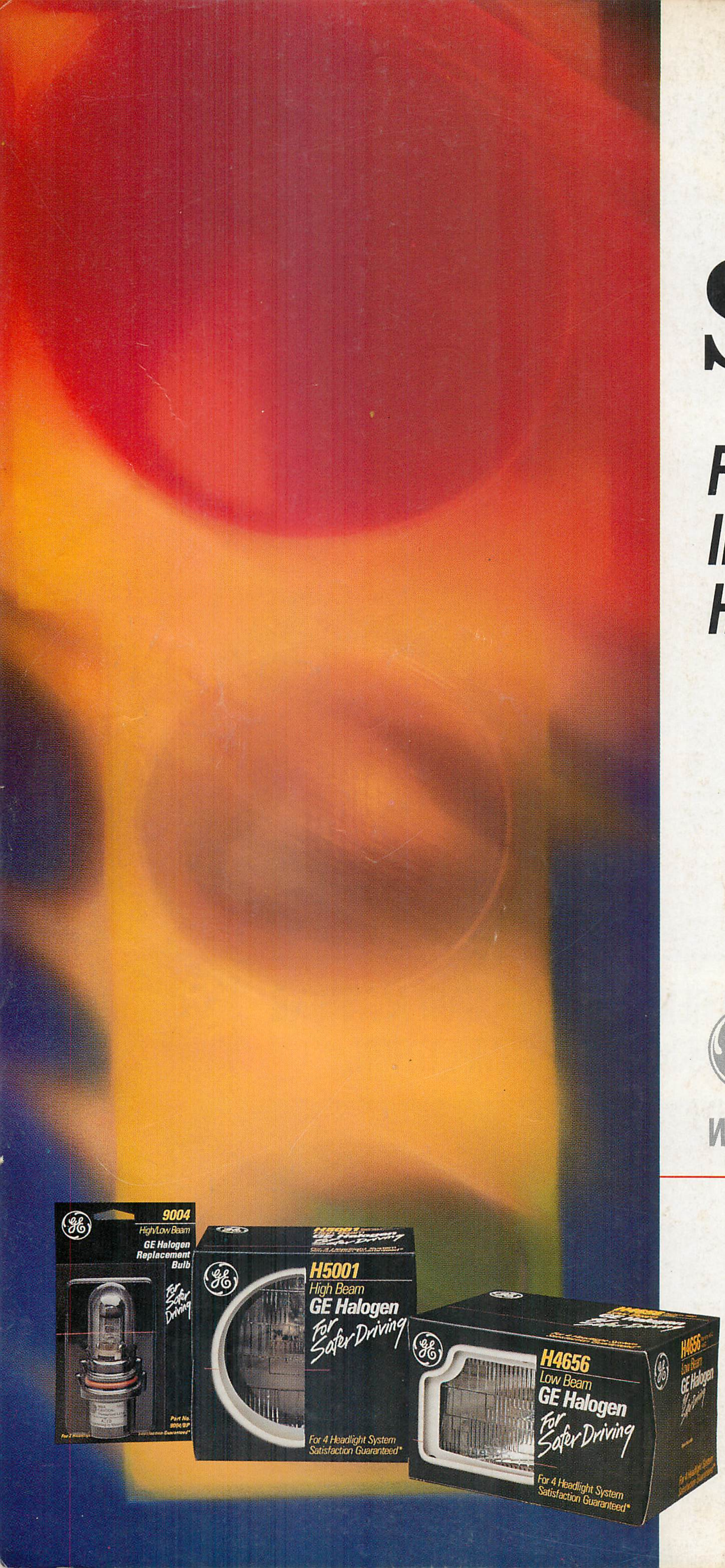
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